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SUN-DIAL SAYINGS

REV. JOHN C. HILL

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Sun-Dial Sayings

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BY

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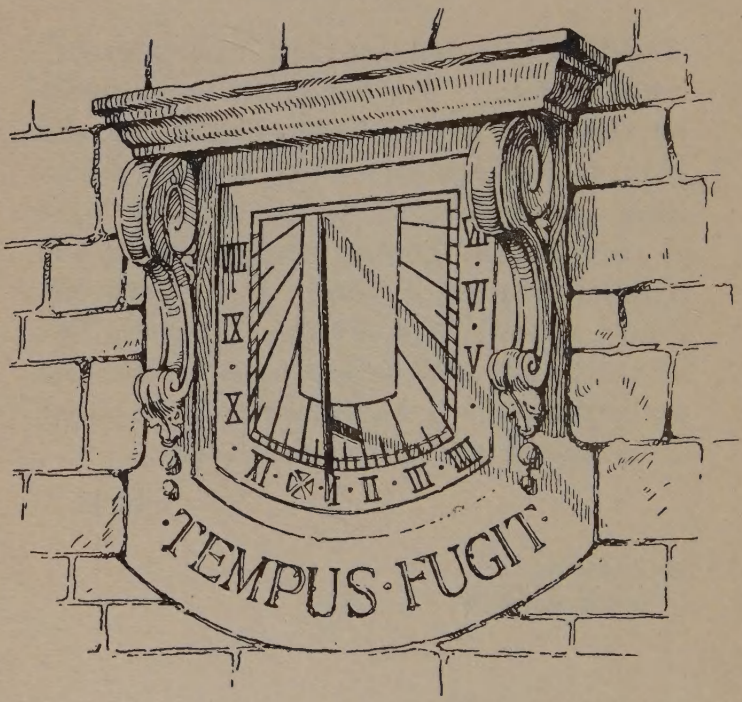
PREFACE

THIS little book contains much wisdom in concentrated form. It is hoped that it will prove increasingly helpful and instructive to boys and girls of school age, and be the means of stimulating a genuine interest in true religion. Some of the talks are for very young children, and some for those who are older. Parents, Sabbath-School teachers, and preachers may also find here and there a few suggestive themes for talks to the children. It is sent forth with the prayer that it may be used of God for His Glory.

J. C. H.

MURE MANSE,
IRVINE, AYRSHIRE.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THE SUN-DIAL

In a quaint old-fashioned garden
Near the fountain on the lawn,
There's an ancient sun-dial standing,
Crumbling, old, and worn,
Put there by some distant owner
Long ere clocks told time o' day,
By its shade the hours to measure,
As they sped their way.

But in dark and wintry weather,
When with clouds the skies are clad,
When the days are dark and cheerless
And the hours are sad ;
When the smiling sun is banished,
Kindly shadows cannot play,
And the philosophic sun-dial
Measures not the day.

Yes, the philosophic sun-dial,
Built in wisdom we've forgot,
Standing mutely and forbearing
To lament its lot,
Heeding not the storm and tempest,
Or the snowy flakes a-mounting,
Waiting just to mark the moments
That are worth the counting.

Mark you, children, here is wisdom
For the ordering of life
(Which must hold alike in measure
Happiness and strife),
Here's a simple lesson for you,
Well worthy of the learning—
Why not keep your faces always
To the sunshine turning ?

Stand with simple faith and patience,
Like the sun-dial, bravely dumb,
Patience in the frown of fortune,
Faith in joys to come.
All the hours of gloom and sadness,
Count them not, for they are done,
But the glorious hours of gladness—
COUNT THEM, LIVE THEM, EVERY ONE.

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Sun-Dial Sayings

I

"TEMPUS FUGIT"

("Time Flies")

"The time is short."—1 Cor. vii. 29.

Most boys and girls have seen a sun-dial. It is a very ingenious contrivance for telling the time by the sun. There is mention of the sun-dial in the Bible in the Book of Kings, but it was probably in existence long before that. You will see "public" sun-dials in cities like London and in villages like Doune. The one in Leitch's Court, Trongate, Glasgow, is dated 1716, and it was used by the people to tell them the time long before the advent of the public clock. People looked at the sun-dial during the day, and in addition to seeing the correct time, they were usually reminded of the fleeting hours by some wise saying in epigrammatic form.

Now, on many sun-dials you will find the words "Tempus Fugit." You perhaps wondered what that meant? One little boy who read them wondered if it was the name of the man who made the sun-dial, as the grandfather

clock in his home had the same words painted in gold on it! Other boys and girls have seen the words on the beautiful floral clock in West Princes Street Gardens, Edinburgh. "Tempus Fugit"—the words mean "Time flies." The motto was specially chosen for a memorial sun-dial at Drymen, so that passers-by would be reminded of the brevity of life. How true they are—Time flies.

When you are at the beginning of a New Year you say to yourself: "What a long time to look forward to!" Whole 365 days till next New Year! When you get your summer holidays from school, you imagine at the beginning of them that it is a long, long time. You think of all the days you will have for play, free from lessons. Boys think of days they will spend fishing, rambling over the country-side, and playing football and cricket. Girls think of the fine time they are going to have romping about, building castles on the sands, and playing at houses, and with their dollies. Oh, yes, it all seems a long while, but "Tempus Fugit!" Very soon the weeks are spent, and you are back at school again at your lessons. Time flies.

You know, boys and girls, that the Bible pictures our life as being like a vapour, so soon it passes away. It is like a flower growing up, then drooping, and dying. Some sun-dials I have seen have a bird-on-the-wing engraved on them to impress onlookers that our life is like the single flight of a bird. Life is short. Some-

time when you get grandfather in a very good mood, ask him about this sun-dial. He will start to tell you things that happened to him when he was a little boy like you! Then you will hear him say: "Why, it looks as if it happened just yesterday." Grandfather is right. Time flies. You boys and girls remember when you first went to school—or was it that you were "taken" unwillingly by mother? Anyway, doesn't it seem only a short time ago since that morning? Time flies. Very soon you will be grown to be men and women, doing your bit of work in this big and busy world, and you'll be looking back at this time of your life now, and saying: "Tempus Fugit." The sun-dial is right. Time flies quickly, sure enough.

The lesson is plain. Time flies by so quickly that we must not waste one precious moment. We are here in this world to make character, and God has given to us the Gift of Time to do it in. How are you using your time? Are you using it wisely, or are you frittering it away? Learn while you are young to value TIME. "Tempus Fugit!"

"Time's a hand's breadth; 'tis a tale;
'Tis a vessel under sail;
'Tis an eagle in its way,
Darting down upon its prey;
'Tis an arrow in its flight,
Mocking the pursuing sight."

Time flies.

II

"SET ME RIGHT, AND USE ME WELL, AND I THE TIME TO YOU WILL TELL"

"Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth."—ECCLES. xii. 1.

THERE is a sun-dial at Cornwall which speaks every day to its owner. It says: "Set me right, and use me well, and I the time to you will tell." What a splendid saying, boys and girls, and what a fine message for us all.

1. "Set me right."

You cannot put the sun-dial down anywhere at all, or in any kind of way, and expect it to tell you the time. It won't do it unless you set it right. The sun-dial must be set according to mathematics. So our lives must be properly set too. Suppose you are at school and the teacher tells you to draw a circle with your compass. You draw a fine circle. Then the teacher tells you to draw lines through the centre to the circumference. But, somehow, you have lost the centre, and you don't know just yet how to find it again. You make a guess, and then you start drawing twenty or thirty lines. Then you look at it. What an awful confused drawing! The lines are crossing and recrossing at different places, and the whole thing appears at sixes and

sevens. What's wrong? You look at the drawing of another boy's. His lines are all properly "set." Everything looks so neat. Why? Because his lines have all been drawn through the one centre. He has started right with the centre. So you see, boys and girls, that it is of the utmost importance in life how you are set. Your life may be beautiful, orderly, successful, or it may be unpleasant, confused, and a failure. It depends on how you are "set."

John Stuart Mill, a wise writer and economist, attributed his cold, hard, critical nature to his early training.

John Ruskin, another great writer, said that he owed his success in life to his early love for the Bible. His beautiful style and lofty thoughts he owed to that one thing.

So you see, boys and girls, the sun-dial speaks words of wisdom. Keep away from bad companions, bad books, bad pictures in the cinema, and love that which is good, and true, and lovely. In other words, have Jesus and His words in your heart—the centre of your life—and you will be "set right."

2. Then the sun-dial says: "Use me well."

Of course, that request stands to reason. If the sun-dial is ill-used and knocked about, it won't tell the time. It may be very handsome. It may have magnificent brass engravings, but if it is neglected and ill-used, it will soon be of no use at all. The sun-dial, therefore, says "Use me well."

God has given every boy and girl a body. You are to use it well. It is sacred. You have read *Childe Harold*, or, perhaps, *An Address to the Ocean*. You thought to yourself what wonderful poetry, and what a wonderful genius Byron must have been to be able to compose them. Yes, but Byron might have been a far greater man if only he had used himself well. He didn't, and he died a young man. Robert Burns, our national poet, was even a greater genius. He was a most loving and lovable man. He wrote some of the world's greatest songs that will last for ever. But he took to strong drink. He did not use himself well, and he died at the early age of thirty-seven. Many lovers of De Quincey's works shed tears as they pass up Renfield Street, in Glasgow, and see there the inscription pointing out where the great writer used to stay. He did not use himself well. He took to opium-eating, and died long before his time. So, boys and girls, remember that if you would have a chance in this life, you must use yourself well. Have a healthy mind in a healthy body. Just think of Jesus, when He was a boy. He was strong and ruddy, and ever mindful that His body was a temple of the Holy Spirit. So are the bodies of us all.

3. And then the sun-dial says: "I the time to you will tell."

That is, it will fulfil its function. It will do its work if it is set right and used well.

And that is the only way boys and girls can fulfil the purpose of life too.

Here was Jesus. He was "set right," and He "used Himself well." He therefore did the work that His Father gave Him to do.

I was reading the other day Ian Maclaren's story, *Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush*. That is a treat in store for you. When Ian was a little boy he was staying for a holiday with his uncle in the country. On the Sabbath he went to Church. It so happened that it was Communion. Ian was greatly impressed by one of the old elders, whom he kept watching during the whole service. The old man had pure white hair, and he looked very reverent in his black suit, white collar, and tie. He watched the happy look on his face as he handed round the bread and the wine. He thought he had never seen anyone so venerable. Next day, Ian happened to be out playing on the road, and who did he see but this same old man with the white hair. But what a contrast to the previous day! The old man was dressed in an old torn suit, and he was breaking a heap of stones with a hammer. Ian ran home and he asked his uncle if it was really him. "Yes," he said, "that is old John. He's only a poor man, and a stone-breaker; but he is the most Christ-like man I have ever known." What a tribute! Old John was also "set right," and he "used himself well," and therefore he was Christ-like, loved, and respected by all. The common stone sun-dial, if it is set right and used well, will tell the time just as accurately as the

most costly stone. "Set me right, and use me well, and I the time to you will tell." Have Jesus in your heart; remember that you are a temple of the Holy Spirit, and you will do the work God has given you to do in life.

III

"BEGONE ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS"

"The king's business required haste."—1 SAM. xxi. 8.

THIS is the message on many sun-dials. You will find it on Paper Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, on the dial at High Lane, near Disley, in Cheshire, and in abbreviated form "Mind your business" on the dial on the church tower at Furneaux Pelham. A Scotsman from Dumbarton was holidaying in Yorkshire, and noticed a sun-dial at Moorland School, Goathland. He saw that there was some writing on it, but no one could decipher it. After a great deal of trouble he climbed up to it, rubbed it clear, and then was rebuked with the message: "MIND YOUR BUSINESS." "Go about your business," says the dial on the buttress of St James's Church, Bury St Edmunds.

Perhaps some little boy or girl would be sent a message to the grocer's or butcher's. They see the sun-dial, and keep watching it to see the shadow move. Then they forget what shop they were sent to, and what it was they were to purchase. So you see that the sun-dial's message is a timely one:—"Begone about your business."

The history of the sun-dial at Bisley is interesting. The dial was removed some time ago from the Inner Temple. There was a long discussion among the Benchers regarding a

suitable saying to put on it. They held a meeting to decide, and instructed the artist to call at a certain time for their decision. The Benchers were busy with other matters, and quite forgot about the sun-dial, but a messenger came at the time arranged. When he arrived, he saw an old grumpy-looking man sitting poring over a book.

"I've come," he said, "for the saying for the sun-dial." The old man hadn't heard of the arrangement, and turning round angrily to the lad, who was interrupting him as he thought, he said, "Begone about your business!" The messenger went away, and he reported to his master that the old man said it was "Begone about your business." "Are you sure that is what he said?" "Yes," replied the lad, "those were his exact words." The artist took it as the message, and engraved the saying on the sun-dial! The Benchers saw it when it was finished and set up, and, instead of being angry, they were highly pleased! They might have discussed for hours, but they could have chosen no better message. "Begone about your business." The advice is good. The boy and girl who dilly-dally with their time can never be successful. You have seen a boy in the examination room looking all about him instead of getting on with his work, and the result is that he is among the failures. You have seen the message boy sitting by the wayside reading some "penny terrible," instead of delivering his message smartly. Sometimes you are out playing, or seeing the pictures, when you should

be at the business of your lessons or music. All that way leads to failure. There is one way to success—"Begone about your business."

Now, you would notice that our text says: "The king's business required haste." We are all on The King's Business: everyone of us, and every day. You remember that Jesus said: "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Jesus was always alert on the King's business. And the King's business is just our ordinary, everyday work. Your lessons to improve the mind—that's the King's business. Helping mother with the household duties—tidying up, going messages, watching baby—that's the King's business. There's some poor or sick person who would be so glad to see you and hear you sing a hymn. There's some blind person you can assist across the street. That's your business, and it's the King's. We are hearing a lot these days about the Girl Guides and the Boy Scouts, and one thing they are taught is to be always on the alert to do good.

Two troops of Boy Scouts in England issued appeals last Christmas for discarded or slightly broken toys, which were not wanted by their owners. The boys repaired the broken toys, cleaned up others, and then they gave them to poor boys and girls who could not afford to buy any. That is the King's business.

Miss Phyllis Lockie, of the 9th Brighton Girl Guides, was decorated with a medal by the French Boy Scouts for saving a French patrol leader from drowning. The President of the French Boy

Scouts' Association, in his speech, said that Phyllis had done much to create a bond of friendship between the Girl Guides of England and the Boy Scouts of France. That is the King's business.

Doing all the good you can, carrying sunshine with you wherever you go, seeking to make the world sweeter and better—that's the King's business, and the King has appointed you to carry it out. Do not be slack then—"Begone about your business."

"I am mother's little help,
And a lot of things I do;
I can see who's at the door,
I can dust the parlour, too.
I can run upstairs for things,
Hush the baby when he cries;
Look with him at picture books,
Help him with his little toys.

I am mother's little help,
I can sew and I can knit,
Sit still when she wants her rest,
And not move the least, least bit.
I can tidy up the rooms,
Pick up things that baby throws,
Run and tell her every time
When he into mischief goes.

I am mother's little help,
Little errands I can run,
Put each thing in its own place,
Thread her needles one by one.
I'm her second pair of hands,
And I wonder—do not you?
If she had not help like me,
How her tasks she'd ever do."

You are on the King's BUSINESS. Begone about your business.

IV

"ASPICE, RESPICE, PROSPICE"

"Look, Look Back, Look Forward"

"Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before."
—PHIL. iii. 13.

DEAR boys and girls, this is a grand saying on the old sun-dials at Torphins, Aberdeen, and Inch House, Midlothian. Charles Dickens was very fond of his little book called *A Christmas Carol*. I hope you have read it. If you haven't, read it at Christmas time, and you will enjoy it. Early in the story we come across a notorious character called Scrooge. Dickens had the happy skill of giving his characters very appropriate names. Scrooge! Isn't there something very mean about the mere sound of the name? Scrooge was a most niggardly man. He was also hard-hearted. Nobody liked him, for nobody likes mean and selfish people. Even beggars would not approach him. They were afraid of his snarl. Little children ran away when they saw him coming. That is always a bad sign. You remember how they ran to Jesus, and how He welcomed them? But Scrooge's looks told everyone what he was. He was a rich man, but at the same time a miserable man. He found no happiness in life. And no

wonder, for what good did Scrooge ever try to do anyone? None at all. Scrooge was self-centred, miserly, unhappy. "Look well after number ONE"; that was his motto. One night, however, Scrooge had a vision, a dream. There appeared to him three ghosts.

The first ghost was the ghost of the PAST.

The second ghost was the ghost of the PRESENT.

The third ghost was the ghost of the FUTURE.

What a lesson Scrooge learned from them that night! There before him he saw his past selfish life. He saw then exactly what he was at present. Then he got a glimpse into his future. I need not go into the story. Scrooge was startled when he saw his real self. He became a changed man as a result. He became a good man, and that meant being a good master. He became a good friend, and that meant a new friendship for Tiny Tim and others. He became generous, genial, loving, and helpful to all.

Looking back he saw what a fool he had been, and that selfishness was the cause of his unhappiness. Looking at the present, he saw that God had surely been merciful to him in bearing with him. Yes, despite his meanness, God had been patient and kind to him.

Looking to the future, he saw himself a new man. By God's help he would mend his ways and make up for the past. And what wonderful opportunities he found all around!

So you see, boys and girls, that there is great wisdom in the saying on the old sun-dial. Learn to look at the past. See your past years. See

how good God has been. Learn how wonderfully He has provided for you. Look how He has guided you every day. You have sometimes been naughty, and unkind, and untruthful, yet God has had patience with you, and He has been ever kind.

Learn to look at the present. You have good health and strength. Have you ever thanked God for soundness of body and soundness of mind? You have a good father and mother who care for you. You have a happy home. You have a good school to educate you. You have Church and Sabbath School. You have hundreds of blessings. Just try to count them up. Look at the present and you will thank God. Look, then, to the future. What possibilities there are for every one of you! Try to see yourself in light of future years. You can be growing every day a little more like Jesus, and therefore nearer the Perfect Life. Think of the endless joys also laid up in store for you in your Father's house.

Think and see what you CAN be.

Look, look back, look forward, and you boys and girls will praise God for His goodness.

V

"PEREUNT ET IMPUTANTUR"

" The hours vanish, yet are on record "

" They pass, and are reckoned "

" By, but not by with "

" Shall not the JUDGE of all the earth do right ? "—GEN. xviii. 25.

HERE, boys and girls, is a concentrated admonition on the sun-dial at the Dutch Reformed Church, New York. It warns us that although the moments swiftly pass away, and nobody can recall them, yet we are to be called upon by the Giver of Time to render an account as to how we spent them. The moments, the minutes, the hours, the years are by, yes, but the sun-dial assures us they are not by with. There is a day of reckoning coming. Have you ever heard the dream that the great historian Froude had? He was sitting in a railway carriage on his way to London when he became drowsy, and fell sound asleep. He dreamed that he saw the train running at full speed. Then suddenly it was signalled on to a side line, where it stopped for some time. He then saw porters running up and down the platform, crying out, "All change here!" "All change here!" Everyone had to come out of the train with their luggage, and

line up on the platform. He then saw a chief official giving instructions. Each passenger was to take up his luggage and go into a large room to have it thoroughly examined.

Then he heard a great hubbub. There were volumes of grumbling and complaining. None of the passengers could find the luggage they had brought with them! They were in a terrible state of mind. Instead of bulky luggage they had brought with them, they could find only small packets with their names written on them. Despite their complaints, each passenger had to take this packet into the examination room. The packets were opened out, and it was found that this new luggage consisted of the good each passenger had done in the world. Any little kindness they had done was there. Words of kindness they had spoken—they were there. These were their real possessions.

Froude looked round, and he saw that there was great consternation among the first-class passengers. They had had great worldly possessions—very bulky luggage. They had done their own business. They had inherited fortunes. They had harmed nobody. They had given to hospitals, infirmaries, and institutions for the helpless. "Yes, yes," said the examiner, "but the only luggage that counts is that good in which 'you,' yourself, were."

Then Froude saw in his dream that certain things in the luggage had a "hall-mark" stamped on them. Work that would endure for ever had the hall-mark of eternity on it.

He was busy looking over the articles, when he heard a confused noise. There was a flashing of lights, and the rush and bustle of crowds. The carriage doors were thrown open, and the great historian suddenly woke up, and realised that the train had reached London!

Froude, however, never forgot his dream.

The hours vanish, you see, yet the good or the evil you put into them is on record. The golden moments you have filled with good deeds, the help you have given to those less fortunate than yourself, the cup of cold water you have given gladly in Christ's name—these are among your best possessions.

Of course, if Froude hadn't been wakened up so soon he would have seen that there was another big luggage van, and that this van contained the evil things that the passengers had done during the years. Some passengers would have a very small package of good deeds and a big hamper of undesirable things. Others would have a big hamper of good things and only a small package of undesirable things. We would like to be amongst the latter passengers, wouldn't we?

So the message of the dream is just the message of the sun-dial.

Fill your hours with good: Love the Truth: Follow Jesus: So that when time is "by" you will not be ashamed of your luggage on the day of the Great Reckoning.

VI

"MOMENTS MAKE THE YEAR, AND TRIFLES LIFE"

"Thou hast been faithful over a few things."—
ST MATT. XXV. 21.

DEAR boys and girls, you will recognise this as a good sun-dial saying. It emphasizes the importance of little things. But before we come to the inner meaning of it, let me tell you a poem, entitled "Little by Little." Here it is:—

"Little by little all things grow—
Plants and trees—from the seed we sow;
The beginning of life is under the ground,
In darkness and silence all profound;
Then a tiny shoot comes up to the light,
And the plant increases in beauty and might.

Little by little bad habits grow;
How they begin, we scarcely know;
A little wrong act, a single false word,
One pleasant drink in the poison-cup stirred,
Repeated once in a while and again,
And lo! we are fast in a cruel chain.

Little by little good principles grow;
Steady and sure, though sometimes slow;
A little act done because it is right
Soon comes to be choice—a real delight;
Until "second nature" it grows to be,
And we walk in its light and liberty.

Little by little great projects grow ;
As rivers rise in a spring's o'erflow,
And gather breadth, and depth, and strength,
And run their grand majestic length,
So every work on earth has begun
In the thought, and deed of some noble one.

Little by little our life wears on ;
Days, weeks, and years, and the whole has gone ;
The days are made up of minutes so small,
To do our true work we have need of all.
Then carefully fill each tiny space,
If you would have joy at the end of the race."

So you see how very important the little things are. Moments make the year, little habits make up life. The ocean is made up of little drops of water, the earth of little grains of sand. From the tiny mustard seed, the pea, the bean, the acorn, what large and useful things come!

And moments—little fractions of time—make up the year, and the longest life.

Here, then, are FIVE GOLDEN RULES:—

1. Do a little kindness every day.

Make sure that no day passes without some kind action having been done. Learn early the value and the discipline of self-denial. It will, perhaps, be rather hard at first, but persevere, and at the end of 365 days you will be so skilful that it will come quite natural to you. Think, then, of how, when the story of the year comes to be written, what a wonderful record it will show of little kindnesses!

2. Learn a little knowledge every day.

Don't let any day pass without learning some-

thing new. Learn even one new fact every day. See what that will amount to! At the end of one year you will have 365 facts, and in ten years over 3000. The way I learned shorthand writing was not by doing a great deal all at once, and then letting it alone for a while. I learned it bit by bit every day, until I mastered it. So, boys and girls, you will grow wiser and wiser if you add to your knowledge every day.

3. Speak little words of encouragement every day.

In your own home, in the school, at Church, in the street or in the playground, be ever a little encourager. Don't be grumpy, fault-finding, and gloomy. Be bright and cheerful. Encourage other boys and girls to do well, to go to Church, to attend your Sabbath School and Band of Hope, to love what is right and noble. Be a little ray of sunshine every day.

4. Read a little portion of the Bible every day.

One chapter a day, and soon you will have read the whole Bible. One golden verse committed to memory every day, and soon, like Timothy, Paul's great friend, you will have a wonderful knowledge of the Scriptures. Just think of how, when you are old and your eyes begin to fail you, and you are weak, what a comfort it will be to remember all the precious words you learned day by day during the years.

5. Learn to be a little more like Jesus every day.

The way to do that is simply to love the things that He loved. To do as far as possible the things that He did. To speak the words that He spoke. To pray as He prayed. To love others as He loved all.

Then at the end of life's day you will find that, if you have been faithful in these "trifles," you have reached Perfection, and Perfection, as Michael Angelo says, "is no trifle." Moments make the year, and trifles Life.

VII

"MOX NOX"

"Night (Cometh) Soon"

> "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."—St John ix. 4.

On the wall of Elsworth Church, near Cambridge, there is a very fine sun-dial which says "Mox Nox." What does it mean? "Mox Nox." It simply means: "Night comes on soon."

The motto was chosen by Dr Samuel Johnson, the learned composer of the dictionary. Boswell tells us that the doctor had it engraved on his watch—Νὺξ γὰρ ἔρχεται. He considered the words of Jesus of supreme importance, as a reminder to him to improve himself daily in view of the endless years.

The words were also the favourite of Sir Walter Scott. The Greek version 'EPXETAI NY, "Night cometh," is to be found on the sun-dial at Dromore Castle, Co. Kerry, and the English version, "Work while it is day," is on the dial at a house in Wester Coates Gardens, Edinburgh.

It is a good bit of wisdom, for how apt we are to forget the fact that the light of day is all too short, and night hastens on.

Now, I should like you boys and girls to learn three lessons from the saying on this sun-dial.

1. Night cometh soon, therefore we are to work hard while it is day. You are to "stick in" at your work of learning your lessons, and fitting yourself for life. How many poets, doctors, ministers, teachers, tradesmen bewail misspent time? A young man at Glasgow University said to me, "Oh, but if I only had back my school-days again! I can tell you there would be less play and more work." Spinoza, the great philosopher, thought no advice could be given to boys and girls better than the sun-dial saying, and he himself chose it from an old sun-dial as the motto of his life. You boys and girls are in the morning of your life now. The day is before you. What a grand opportunity is yours! See to it that you don't neglect it. Fill the days with plenty of hard work, for the night cometh, when no one can work.

2. Night cometh soon, therefore prepare for old age. You know that some little boys and girls are regular spendthrifts. Whatever money they get they spend it all. In the days of the old folk it was common for a boy to receive threepence on Saturday. And this is the way many a good and thrifty boy divided it up. A penny went into his savings' bank for the future, a penny was given to his Church for Christ's work, and a penny was spent on himself. I wonder how many boys and girls would do that to-day? Perhaps you are too fond of sweets, or going to picture palaces. Well, it is good to start early to practise thrift. "Mox Nox"—night

comes on too soon, old age, and infirmity, and work is no longer possible. The wise boy and girl lays by a portion every day, or every week, for old age, or when they must retire from work.

3. Night cometh soon, therefore, it is wise to come early to Jesus. Very few people come to Jesus in the evening of life. They get hardened by the world, and when they hear the Gospel invitation of Salvation, too often it falls on deaf ears.

At the Night Asylum for the Homeless in Glasgow, there are hundreds of people who have no money to pay for a night's lodgings. When you speak to them it is invariably the same story —neglect of youth, years of drinking, life without Christ. Some of them were once bright little boys and girls like you, but they forgot the wisdom of the sun-dial—" Mox Nox "—" Night cometh soon." Night came on and found them unprepared.

So if you are wise, boys and girls, you will take advantage of the day-time of your life. Work hard; be thrifty; come early to Jesus. " Mox Nox "—remember night comes on soon.

VIII

(1) "REGI ET REGNO FIDELISSIMA"
"To the King and His Kingdom most loyal"

(2) "LONG LIVE THE KING"

(3) "May those be blest with length of days,
Who still proclaim King William's praise"

"One is your master, even Christ."—ST MATT. xxiii. 8.
"Be thou faithful unto death."—REV. ii. 10.

YOU will see from the sayings on these three sun-dials, boys and girls, that sun-dials are loyal. The old sun-dial on the tower of Old Thundridge Church, Herts., tells us to be loyal to the king who happens to be reigning at the time. The inscription on the sun-dial in the Green Country of Roscommon pays a tribute to the glorious memory of King William.

Everyone admires loyal boys and girls. I like, somehow, the boy who is loyal. This church is the best church! Why? Because it is his church and the church of his father and mother. It is the church he worships in. He is loyal to the church, because he loves it. You are loyal to your home, because it is your home. You are loyal to your father and mother, because they are your parents.

Did you ever hear of more loyal hearts than the Highland? Read sometime R. L. Stevenson's

Kidnapped, and you will see how loyal they were even unto death.

It was the loyalty of millions of our soldiers that won the Great War. Our brilliant generals sometimes receive all the praise, but they depended on the loyalty of each man.

We delight to see loyalty.

And at the same time we despise those who are disloyal. Why is it that we don't like Judas Iscariot? Is it not because of the fact that Jesus, his Master, trusted him as one of His disciples, and yet Judas betrayed Him?

When boys are playing football, if one or two players want to "show off," and refuse to be loyal to their captain, they will let their side down.

You know how loyal Boy Scouts are to the Scout Law. They have ten good laws, and they pride themselves on their loyalty. A twelve-year-old Scout was cycling along a street in a town in Hampshire when he collided with a motor-car. On examination it was found that he had broken the thighs of both legs, his right leg, both arms, his left collar-bone, and a couple of ribs.

As he was carried into a neighbouring garage, he turned to his bearers and asked them to send for his Scoutmaster. The Scoutmaster arrived, and the Scout attempted to give him the Scout sign of brotherhood, and then, with a tremendous effort, said: "I did not cry out, sir. I kept my promise, and I tried to whistle." There's loyalty for you. And during many visits to the

operating theatre the same boy kept a stiff upper lip, and won the praise and admiration of the hospital staff by his loyalty.

The story of David Livingstone in the heart of darkest Africa, the story of John G. Paton in New Hebrides, the story of Gilmour of Mongolia, and of all our foreign missionaries is the story of loyalty to a Cause, and loyalty to the King.

The Scottish Covenanters are the pride of Scotland, because, notwithstanding the fact that they were driven from their churches and homes, tortured and imprisoned, persecuted and martyred—they were faithful to their King—even unto death.

Pride yourselves, boys and girls, on your loyalty to the Great King. He makes war constantly on sin and worldliness. He is ever fighting for Truth and Righteousness. We are all in His great army. Are we all loyal?

"Chosen to be soldiers
In an alien land,
'Chosen, called, and faithful,'
For our Captain's band,
In the service royal
Let us not grow cold;
Let us be right LOYAL,
Noble, true, and bold."

IX

"WATCH WEEL"

"Watch."—St Mark xiii. 37.

The old sun-dial at Balloch gives a gentle warning to us all. It says: "Watch weel." Keep a sharp look-out in life. You know that some boys and girls never seem to look where they are going. They will run into you on the street, or they will get in the way of some bus, and almost be killed. Some little time ago I saw a message boy coming along the street with his basket over his shoulder. He was absorbed in reading some story of adventure. He wasn't watching where he was going, and all of a sudden he walked right into an electric standard. How he screamed with pain! I saw that there was a lump gradually rising on his head, so I pressed a half-crown against it. After a while he stopped crying, and I took the silver off the lump to see how it stood. "Well, it's not so bad," I said, "but watch in future where you are going." I put the half-crown back into my pocket, of course, for you see if I had given it to him he might have congratulated himself on his accident, and he would not have learned his lesson. So I let him walk off a sadder, but a wiser boy.

1. Watch where you go in life, boys and girls. "Watch weel."

Go to no place without the permission of your father or mother. If you want a good rule, take this one: "Go to no place where you would not like Jesus to find you." "Watch weel" where you go.

2. "Watch weel" your companions.

Choose carefully the little chums you go with. Remember that they will have a big influence in your life, for you tend to become like those you associate with. You boys remember R. M. Ballantyne's *Coral Island* and *The Gorilla Hunters*, don't you? What great friends Jack, Ralph, and Peterkin were! How they influenced each other's lives. Beware of the boy who plays with you just for what he can get from you; he is what we call the "sponger." Watch him weel. Beware of the boy who swears, the boy who is not upright and honest, the boy who speaks lightly of his father and mother. Watch them weel, and don't have anything to do with them. Choose your companions, if you take my advice, from the Church. Get a good Christian companion, and you have a treasure beyond price. "Watch weel." And spend most of your time with the greatest companion of all,—Jesus.

3. "Watch weel" your words.

Watch your words, for remember words spoken can never be recalled.

If you cannot speak good, true, and kind words about other boys and girls, keep silent

about them. You remember the hero in R. L. Stevenson's *Kidnapped?* David was young and inexperienced, and he had a great friend in Alan. You would have thought after all the trying and terrible experiences they came through together, that they would never have quarrelled. Yet a few hasty, ill-chosen words of David's nearly led to a duel and a separation. How sorry David was afterwards, but his sorrow could not recall the hasty words. "Watch weel" your words.

4. And "Watch weel" your temper.

How easy it is to quarrel! But remember it always takes "two" to make a quarrel. One wee boy quarrels with his sister because he thinks she has got a bigger bit of apple than he has. Another sees a boy making faces at him on the street, or calling him nasty names, and there's the start of a quarrel. One boy or girl cheats while playing a game, and a general quarrel results. You perhaps want to get out, and because it is raining, mother says you must stay in. You go away in a fit of temper. You want some toy, or you want to go somewhere you are not to be allowed to, and because you are refused you stamp your little foot, and you look so angry. I wish sometimes when you are in one of these sulky moods you could see yourself in a mirror! You wouldn't believe that it was YOU. You would look so ugly. Boys and girls, "Watch weel" your temper.

Jesus in our text was telling His disciples to watch for His Coming again. He always comes again in every good deed, in every time of trouble, always when you need Him. "Watch weel" for Him.

X

"LUX ET UMBRA VICISSIM, SED SEMPER AMOR"

(1) "Light and Shadow by turns, but LOVE always"

(2) "Hours fly,
Flowers die,
New days,
New ways,
Pass by;
LOVE STAYS."

"And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is LOVE."—1 COR. xiii. 13.

HERE are two sun-dials that tell us of the supremacy of Love. Last summer I saw a big crowd of boys and girls on the seashore. I noticed that they were all within an enclosure, which was reserved. Each boy and girl was standing beside a little flag—a Union Jack. I saw then that it was a sand-castle design building competition. A whistle blew, and over one hundred boys and girls started to work. Some boys started to dig and build a fine castle like Stirling or Edinburgh Castle, or a rock like Dumbarton Rock. Some built castles representing local churches, buildings, and bridges. One little girl made a fine impression of a Scottish thistle. Another had a deep pool with a boat and her dollie in it, representing "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep." Another had a large shoe of sand, and several dolls in it. There

were ever so many castles. But there was one little girl near me who kept pat, pat, patting away at the sand with her spade. She never seemed to be making much progress with whatever she meant to build. I took a walk to see how the others were getting on, and some I found were nearly finished. I came back to the little girl, and there she was still pat, pat, patting away at the sand. Whatever could she mean? I looked closer, and I saw she had made the square of sand quite hard and very smooth with her spade. Then very cleverly she cut out on the sand first a Cross, then an Anchor, and then a Heart. She filled these in with white shells, and her work looked very beautiful and well done for such a little girl. She meant it to represent our text—faith, hope, and love—a cross, an anchor, a heart.

1. Faith.

The person who erects a sun-dial does so in faith. He has faith that the sun will rise to-morrow morning, and that it will give its light as it does to-day. Sometimes the sky is cloudy and dark. The sun-dial then does not show the time, but the man has faith to believe that Light will come once more. That is faith. And just in the same way we have faith in God and in His goodness.

2. Hope.

The shadow on the sun-dial represents hope. You have seen the farmer, haven't you, sowing

his seed in the fields? He wouldn't do that unless he hoped that by so doing there would be a good harvest. He is not like one little boy I heard of who planted seeds, and after a week he dug them up to see if they were growing! The sun-dial teaches us ever to bide by God's own time in the hope that all things will be well. We are all in this big world of mystery, but the moving shadow on the sun-dial tells us that God is faithful, and that encourages us to hope for the best. God never forgets to send the Light. He never forgets the day-time and the night-time. He always sends the springtime, summer, autumn, and winter, and then spring-time again. Our Hope is a reasonable Hope.

3. Love.

But over all, the sun-dial reminds us, is Love. Our faith may grow weak, our hope may become dim, but God's Love never changes. You know how well your father and mother love you. You know how they provide a good and comfortable home for you, and provide you with food and clothing. You know how mother tends you most lovingly when you are not well. What is it that makes her do everything in your interest? It is Love. It is Love—the greatest thing in the world. And listen! God showed His Love for us in giving His own Son to die for us, that we might live. We do not know all the reasons why God made this world. We do not know why He made us. We do not know why He should love us. All we know is that He does. Love—

God is Love—and therefore although there are Light and Shadows by turns on the sun-dial, although the hours fly and flowers die, although there are new days and new ways, Love stays.

XI

"A CLOCK THE TIME MAY WRONGLY TELL; I NEVER IF THE SUN SHINE WELL"

> "God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also."—GEN. i. 16

YOU imagine, boys and girls, that this old sun-dial in the Fens is boasting, but it isn't really.

Some very old sun-dials speak as if the sun moved round the sun-dial. The opposite is the case. The sun stands still. It is the earth that moves round the sun. The miracle, therefore, in the Book of Joshua is true. Joshua was not advanced enough in knowledge to know that it was the earth that moved round the sun. He wished for longer light so as to win a decisive victory. You know that some days have longer light than others, due, of course, to many causes, such as a clearer sky. God answered Joshua's prayer; and without interfering at all with the heavenly bodies, there was longer light.

The movements of the heavenly bodies are marvellously accurate.

Great astronomers in England, and also in France, are busily engaged trying to find out one-sixteenth of a second that is missing in the world's time! Between the sun's time, as recorded at Greenwich, and as understood at

Paris, there is that brief and seemingly unimportant discrepancy. No expense is spared to trace the missing fraction. So you see, boys and girls, the sun and the heavenly bodies never go wrong even by the fraction of a second.

Clocks and watches may go wrong. Springs may get broken. The atmosphere may greatly affect the works of any clock. But the sun-dial always shows the correct time. I was looking at the old sun-dial at Knockcushion Gardens, Girvan, this morning, and the time on the steeple clock was just one hour in advance of the sun-dial. That was due to what we call "summer-time." You cannot put the time on the sun-dial *on* one hour! It is always exact.

Now, I want you boys and girls always to cultivate the habit of "exactness" in everything. At home, at school, at church—everywhere. Let me tell you a story.

A school-master sent three different boys to find out the exact time.

The first boy ran off, looked at the clock, and came back and reported to the master: "It's twelve o'clock, sir." In later life that boy turned out to be a bookseller in a small shop.

The second boy, when he returned, reported the time as "Three minutes past twelve." In later life that boy became a physician.

The third boy went to the clock and looked at the exact time to the second. Then he found how long it took him to go back to the school, by going and coming back again. Then he added that time to the time on the clock, and

reported the time to the master: "It is at this moment, sir, twelve hours, ten minutes, fifteen seconds." That boy came to great distinction in life as a famous scientist. His name was Helmholtz. Wasn't that boy really clever? No wonder he won his way to fame.

Boys and girls, be exact. Be thorough. Some boys and girls you can never depend upon. They promise to be at a certain place at a certain time, and they come half an hour late. They say they have been hundreds of times at Dunoon, when probably they have only been eight or nine times. They say that thousands were turned away from some concert when they mean hundreds. They say So-and-so is a millionaire, when the truth is he has only a few hundreds of pounds. They are not exact in anything, and it is a habit that grows on you.

Now, I want you to be exact not only in money and other matters, but also in religion. Know definitely what you believe in. Have a reason for your religion. Know definitely that you are born again. Know definitely Jesus by contact with Him. In all your affairs be reliable, thorough, exact. Others may differ from you, but as the sun-dial does not care how many clocks may differ from it, so you do not need to care when you have the assurance that you are "right." Be exact.

XII

"IMPROVE THE TIME"

"I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments."—Ps. cxix. 59-60.

THERE is a very good New Year resolution on the old sun-dial at Market Harborough. It says: "Improve the Time."

Isn't it a good thing, boys and girls, that Time is divided for us? We have years, months, hours, and moments. We have the seasons—summer, autumn, winter, and spring. Then summer again. Then we have Easter, Christmas, and New Year. Although we set a date, there is no real break between the old year and the new year. But it is good to observe New Year's morning as a fresh start of another year. That is the time to make good resolutions, and what better resolution can you form than to "Improve the Time?"

Now, let me tell you some New Year resolutions of famous people.

Last year, Mr A. G. Gardiner resolved "To try to live up to Akbar's maxim"—"No one ever got lost on a straight road." If you always keep on the straight road in everything, there is no fear of you getting lost in some bypath. Be straight—that's a good way to improve the time.

Mr George Robey, the famous comedian, resolved "To be more tolerant, to give a little

more and take a little more; and, above all, to forgive a little more. In other words—to play cricket." That is a good resolution. It is good to have a "give-and-take" policy. To do during this New Year to others as you would that they should do to you.

The B.B.C.—The Wireless Broadcasting Station. "We look back on a successful year just closed, and this New Year should see the first step in the scheme of redistribution of broadcasting transmitters throughout the country—a scheme which will reduce our present number of twenty stations of limited power to half a dozen of very high power." Good resolution—"To concentrate."

Dr Samuel Johnson advised a youth "To know something about everything, and everything about something." That advice was good in the old days, but to-day boys and girls must concentrate.

Edison's resolution was: "This 'one' thing I do"—"This 'one' thing I know all about—Electricity." Resolve to specialise in life, and concentrate.

Mr Gordon Selfridge resolved "To take myself less seriously this year, and therefore not make the mistake that most people do." A good resolution to improve the time. Taking life too seriously leads to selfishness, dullness, and worry. Learn to think more of others and less of self, and enjoy life better.

Commander Eva Booth: "The New Year opens pregnant with possibilities for the great

Salvation Army. For myself, I shall walk humbly before God, seeking His guidance in all matters. My comrades will, I know, do the same, so that at the end of 1929 we shall be conscious that the best has been done, that the year has been well spent, and that our service to humanity has been approved by the Author of peace and concord."

Sir James Barrie: "To make a new rule from to-day, and try always to be a little kinder than is necessary." To be kind is a good resolution, "for everybody is fighting a pretty hard battle these days."

> "Kind hearts are more than coronets,
> And simple faith than Norman blood."

Mr Henry Arthur Jones, the late dramatist, resolved for 1929 "To seek by all means to improve health."

Sir William Orpen: "I have resolved not to speak so much to newspaper reporters." Sir William was forming a good resolution to keep as far as possible out of the limelight. In the limelight his temptation was towards pride and self-sufficiency.

In the past there have been many good resolutions, such as R. L. Stevenson's: "To travel hopefully"; Dr Donald Macleod's: "To trust in God and do the right"; Mr Fred E. Weatherley's, the distinguished barrister: "To peg away."

The Bishop of Newcastle: "Never to put off till to-morrow what I can do to-day."

Ralph Connor, our beloved author of *The*

Sky Pilot and other books: "To remember I am not my own."

Dr Gordon Stables, the author of so many good books for boys: "To pray without ceasing."

The Bishop of Bath and Wells: "To bear up bravely under the cross."

There are hundreds of "good resolutions." The Psalmist made a good resolution: "To turn more to God's word, and to keep His Commandments."

Resolve then, boys and girls, like these great people, to live better during this year than ever you have done: to be more thoughtful; to be more kindly; to be more frequent in prayer; to read a chapter of the Bible every day; to follow the guidance of Jesus in everything. Ask for His Grace to help you, and this New Year will be the very happiest you have ever had. Here are a little girl's good resolutions:—

"Oh, yes, I will try, for the whole of to-day,
To do what they bid me, and mind what they say;
And even before they can say what they want,
I'll be willing to do it, and not say, 'I can't.'

If anyone teases, I will not be cross,
Nor for something to do need I be at a loss:
I can work in my garden, and play with my brother,
And go little errands to help my dear mother.

I will not be idle at lessons or work,
Nor disturb busy people with questions and talk;
To be earnest in business, merry at play,
Is the way to go happily through the whole day.

Now, if I can Keep resolutions like these,
It will make me more happy and good, and will please
Not my parents alone, but that Father above,
Who delights in all goodness, and kindness, and love."

XIII

"NEW ROSES COME—NEW ROSES GO, BUT I GO ON FOR EVER"

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."—HEB. xiii. 8.

SOMETIMES when we look up at the sky, and at the big, open sea, and at the great mountains, we begin to imagine that these things never change, and that they are everlasting. Many thousands of years ago boys and girls looked up at the twinkling stars, at the planets and the moon, and to-day boys and girls look upon the same moon, stars, and planets. They always seem the very same. The great ocean seems the same to-day as it was last year—yea, a thousand years ago. The great mountains of our country never seem to alter at all year after year. The countryside the old man gazes upon seems the very same as in the days of his youth.

Yet, the truth is that these things are changing, and changing every day. The strongest man in the world grows gradually weaker and weaker. The restless sea is ever in a state of ebb and flow, and never twice the same. Sun, moon, and stars—they are always in a process of change, and one day must pass away.

" Nothing that is can pause or stay,
The moon shall wax, and the moon shall wane,
The mist and cloud shall turn to rain,
The rain to mist and cloud again—
To-morrow to To-day."

And so we wonder, boys and girls, at this saying on the sun-dial: "New roses come, new roses go, but I go on for ever." How can that be? Why, the stone the sun-dial is made of will some day crumble away, and the sun-dial will be no more. The sun will one day spend its last ounce of energy. It cannot go on for ever. Time itself must come to an end. Well, the sun-dial is not boasting. It is simply comparing its long life with the short life of the fragrant roses each season, and when it does that, it seems to go on for ever. That is all.

But there is One who, like God Himself, goes on for ever. There is One who never changes. His name is Jesus.

So, boys and girls, when you think of Jesus, think of Him not only as He lived His earthly life, but as Unchanging and Timeless. Think of Him as He was a little boy brought up in Nazareth. Think of Him working at the carpenter's bench, making tables and chairs and yokes for oxen. See how lovingly and tenderly He called little children to His arms; see Him as He laid His gracious hands on their heads and blessed them. He is the same to-day, loving, gentle, gracious, always willing to bless boys and girls, and do them good. He healed all manner of diseases long ago. He does so

to-day. He said: "Thy sins be forgiven thee, go in peace." He says the same to-day. In everything, Jesus is the same, yesterday, to-day, and for ever. New roses may come, new roses may go, but Jesus goes on for ever.

And then I should like you to remember that "you" are "timeless." The little person inside your body who thinks, and speaks, and decides, and acts, that person goes on for ever and ever. How important, therefore, it is that you should live to-day, and every day, as one who will live for ever. "You" are "your character." See to it, boys and girls, that only those things that are True, and Honest, and Pure, and Lovely, and of Good Report find a place in it. New roses come, new roses go, but YOU go on for EVER.

XIV

"LET OTHERS TELL OF STORMS AND SHOWERS, I'LL ONLY COUNT YOUR SUNNY HOURS"

"Be of good cheer."—St John xvi. 33.

This was the saying chosen by the late Queen Alexandra for the sun-dial at Sandringham. Other sun-dials say: "I count the bright hours only." In this form you will find it on sun-dials at Halliford-on-Thames, the Church at Harrow, Bell Hall, near York (1680), and at Aldeburgh. At Holmwood, in Surrey, it says: "Let others tell of storms and showers, I mark the sunny morning hours."

You know, of course, boys and girls, that the sun-dial only tells the time when the sun shines. When the weather is dull or foggy, or when it is dark at night, the sun-dial cannot record the time. This was rather awkward for people before the day of watches and clocks. But the Romans were very clever people, and so were the Egyptians. They had a most wonderful little instrument called the clepsydra. By this they were able to tell the time when the sun was not shining. At the top of it there was a small opening, which allowed the water to evaporate. Inside the glass there was a small figure with a pointer, which pointed to the time of day. It was not very accurate, as you can well

imagine, for it had to be estimated on calculations of the rate of evaporation. The people found it useful, however, to tell them the time when the sun was not shining. The sun-dial needs the sun, or it is useless. Hence we have the fine saying: "I only count your sunny hours." Now, every boy and girl can do that.

"Sine Sole Sileo"—"Without the sun I keep silence," says a well-known sun-dial. The raging storm, the hours of rain, the cloudy skies, these the sun-dial takes no notice of. These hours it never records. So boys and girls can learn to say nothing about times of trial, or sorrow, or sickness, or disappointment. These are dark hours. You can stop complaining about things when they are not just what you would like. You can count your blessings instead.

One of the cheeriest and finest writers we have is R. L. Stevenson. Yet he didn't remember a single day when he enjoyed good health. These hours, however, he never recorded. He recorded hours of sunshine. He recorded the hours when he was happy with friends, happy hours of reading, hours of sunshine spent in the service of others. "Why," said the great man, "I'd sooner meet a smiling face than find a five-pound note." The hours of sunshine were more valuable to him than gold.

Some of you older boys and girls will have read Sir James Barrie's excellent book, *The Little Minister*. It tells how on one occasion the minister was called to visit a poor sick woman. He went and he offered to pray with her. "Oh,

aye," she said, "I'll be muckle obliged to ye, but I hope, sir, ye'll pray cheerfully." Don't look out for the disagreeable things in life; look out for the agreeable and bright, and you will find them.

We don't like dull, gloomy, fault-finding boys and girls. But how we like the boy and girl who always laughs. Keep in the company of "sunny" boys and girls. Read stories full of cheerfulness. Learn cheerful hymns, songs, and choruses. Keep singing.

We used to sing cheerful choruses in the Army, when we were marching over the long, dusty, Eastern roads. It helped immensely.

Jesus was a man of sunshine, and His Gospel is a Gospel of Good Cheer. Be a member of the Sunshine Band. Remember the little poem:—

"If any little word of mine
May make a life the brighter,
If any little song of mine
May make a heart the lighter;
God help me speak the little word,
And take my bit of singing,
And drop it in some lonely vale,
To set the echoes ringing."

Let others tell of storms and showers, you only count the SUNNY HOURS.

XV

(1) "COME IN TIME"

(2) "GO YOUR WAY INTO HIS COURTS WITH THANKSGIVING"

> "Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth."—Ps. xxvi. 8.

DEAR boys and girls, these sun-dials invite you into God's House, the Church. The first saying is on the beautiful little church at Bradford St George, Suffolk, and the second one on the church porch at Brighstone, Isle of Wight. We will therefore have a little talk about the Church. Perhaps some of you boys and girls wonder, "What's the use of going to Church?" Well, then, let us see a few reasons.

1. Boys and girls should come regularly to Church to worship God. Do not imagine you are too young, or that you are too insignificant to worship. God, your Heavenly Father, delights when you come to His House to read His Word, to join in the Hymns of Praise, to join in the Prayers, and to listen attentively to the sermon.

2. You come to Church to learn. It is an education. At the day-school your teacher is

one of your best friends. The teacher is trying to help you on in life. But you need something more, unless you are going to be a contented little Philistine! You must find means for expanding your faculties, especially when you come to leave school. Your education is never complete. And the Church is your School, and the Bible your text-book. Jesus says: "Learn of Me." You come to Church to learn.

3. You come to Church to cultivate your spiritual life. You are body, soul, and spirit. You must feed your spiritual life as well as your body. In the Children's Sermon you have the Bread of Life broken down into little bits for you. Always ask God when you come into His House to feed you with the Heavenly Manna, and never go away without your little portion.

4. You come to Church for fellowship. You will make good friendships in the Church. Boys and girls who love the Church and its Lord are usually splendid chums. And in Church you will make intimate friendship with the great Friend—Jesus.

5. You come to Church because Jesus used to go. He went with Joseph and Mary His mother, as His custom was. He loved the Temple, and before He left this earth He founded a new Church which He called "My Church." Wherever two or three Christian people are met together, Jesus is in the midst, and there is His Church.

And now, let me ask you, "What better way can you spend the Lord's Day?"

> "A Sabbath well spent brings a week of content,
> And health for the toils of the morrow;
> But a Sabbath profaned, whatsoever be gained,
> Is a sure forerunner of sorrow."

"Come in Time," then, every Sabbath to God's House. Do not be late and in a flurry, or you won't enjoy the service so well. Come expecting a blessing, pray for it, and, I assure you, you will not go away disappointed. May you honour, serve, and love the Church.

XVI

(1) "EX HOC MOMENTO PENDET ÆTERNITAS"
"Now or Never"

(2) "DO IT NOW"

(3) "NOV·OR·NEVER: IVNE ✠ 1614"

(4) "A STITCH IN TIME SAVES NINE"

(5) "BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME."—2 Cor. vi. 2.
"SEEK YE THE LORD WHILE HE MAY BE FOUND."—Isa. lv. 6.
—1754—

You will see from these sayings, boys and girls, that the motto, "Do it now," is a very popular one. The last two sayings from the Bible are on the old sun-dial at Cain's Cross, near Stroud, Gloucestershire. "A stitch in time saves nine" is on the sun-dial at the farm buildings at Camphill, Yorkshire. It is a well-known proverb. A little boy has a hole in his pocket. He first discovered it when a bit of pencil and a button fell through it! Of course, he meant to get it mended. He meant to ask mother, but he was too busy playing, and he put off till to-morrow. To-morrow came, and he was late for school. He rushed off, and on the road he lost his penknife and a penny his mother had given him to buy sweets. But still the hole was not mended! Next day he lost his handkerchief and some

small articles which he had put into his pocket, forgetting that there was a hole in it.

It served him right, you say. Of course it did. If he had taken the advice of the sun-dial, he would have been wealthier and happier. If he had attended to that hole in his pocket at once, what a lot of trouble it would have saved him! So the sun-dial is repeating wisdom when it says: "Do it NOW." Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day.

I have read somewhere that one of the greatest Presidents of America, when he was a little boy at school, wrote on the cover of his old arithmetic book: "Abraham Lincoln—His book and pen—He will be good—But goodness knows when." Now, you boys and girls will say that wasn't a good resolution. If he meant to be good, why did he put off till some indefinite time? Now was the time.

The lessons you put off learning become harder and harder. I want to tell you one secret of success at any examination. It is not to put off preparing for it until the night before the examination. Do each day's lesson each day.

Many a one has meant to do some kindness to an aged father or mother, but they delayed and delayed, until death made it impossible. If you are going to do a kindness—do it NOW.

You said you would weed the garden to-morrow—that was six months ago, and now the garden is overgrown with weeds, and still you have not done it! I'll put by these toys to-morrow. To-morrow comes, and they are not

put by. Next day someone falls over them and is hurt, or the toys get broken! So it is an excellent rule for you to adopt early in life—DO IT NOW.

Above all, the sun-dial saying is true of religion. Do not put off your salvation until to-morrow. It is dangerous. Take Jesus as your Saviour, your Guide, your Counsellor, and your Friend. Do it now! If only boys and girls would remember always the wisdom of the sun-dial, how much happier they would be!

"Do it NOW! By putting off
You may gain a moment's leisure,
Spare some effort. But just think
What it costs, that moment's pleasure.

Unsewn STITCH means stitches nine;
Unmade NOTE, your memory fails you;
Unwrit LETTER, making tryst,
On dilemma's horns impales you.

Unsung PRAISE will disappoint;
Unkept PROMISE cause much sorrow;
Unmet FRIENDLINESS will wound;
While you sit and say 'TO-MORROW.'

Not to speak the word of love
While the one you love is near you—
Putting off till you've more time—
Will your friend be there to hear you?

Not to send the little gift,
Worth so much to weary worker;
Nor the cheque to needy fund,
Labels you no less than 'shirker.'

Do IT NOW! Don't put it off,
Saying, 'I can't take the trouble.'
Train yourself to DO IT NOW;
Your achievement will be double."

DO IT NOW!

XVII

(1) "DOCET UMBRA." 1700—"The shadow teaches"

(2) "LET THE SLIGHT SHADOW TEACH THEE WISDOM"

(3) "THIS DIAL WAS PLACED AMIDST THE FLOWERS,
TO MARK LIFE'S FEW BUT FLEETING HOURS"

(4) "HORAS NON NUMERO NISI SERENAS"
"I count the bright hours only"

"This one thing I do."—PHIL. iii. 13.

DEAR boys and girls, I suppose some of you will have seen the sun-dial at Torrington, Devon. The saying is in Greek, but it means: "Let the slight shadow teach thee wisdom." Boys and girls who belong to London are acquainted with the fine vertical sun-dial on the Dutch Church in Austin Friars. It says: "The shadow teaches."

Well, the shadow on the sun-dial teaches many, many things other than the brevity of life. One lesson in particular I should like you to learn from it this morning, and that is "To do one thing." That is wisdom. The sun-dial does only one thing—it records the bright hours. Some clocks can do many things. They can record the day of the week, the month, and even the year. Other clocks can record the worker's time, and some have fine chimes like West-

minster. These clocks were made, however, specially for that. They do one thing—that for which they were made. The sun-dial counts only the bright hours. It is for that one purpose it is made. It is for that one purpose it is placed in the garden.

Now it is a good thing for boys and girls to find out early in life that the supreme thing is to do ONE THING, and to stick to it. Once you have found what that is, don't go flitting about like a butterfly from flower to flower.

An American father gave this bit of advice to his son: "My lad, first find your bush, and then stick to it. Let the others run from bush to bush if they please, but remember looking at fifty bushes does not count like plucking one."

The advice was sound. The lad adopted it as his motto, and finally won good success. A friend who knew him well wrote of him many years later:—

> "So, while the brilliant triflers failed,
> With all their brains and push,
> Wise, steady-going Johnny won
> By sticking to his bush!"

He did the wise thing. He did not scatter his energies. He did one thing, and he did it well. "This one thing I do," is good wisdom. The sun-dial does the one thing it is fitted for. It counts the bright hours only.

Now, in order to do that, boys and girls must be masters of themselves. "Be master of yourself." Let the shadow teach you wisdom.

A manufacturer needed a boy, and put a bill up in his window: "BOY WANTED—wages 12s. a week; 16s. to the right one. The boy must be master of himself."

As each boy applied the manufacturer asked him, "Can you read?"

"Yes, sir," was the frank reply.

"Can you read this?" asked the manufacturer, pointing out a certain passage in a paper.

"Yes, sir."

"Will you read it to me steadily, and without a break?"

"Yes, sir."

The manufacturer then took the boy into a back room, where all was quiet, and shut the door. Giving the boy the paper, he commanded him to read. The boy took the paper and started. While he was reading, the manufacturer opened a basket, in which were a number of lively little puppies, and tumbled them around the boy's feet. The temptation to turn and see the puppies and note what they were doing was too strong; the boy looked away from his reading and was at once dismissed.

Boy after boy underwent the same experience, till seventy-six had been tried! At last one was found who, in spite of the puppies playing around his feet, read the passage through as he had promised.

When he had finished, the manufacturer was delighted, and asked him: "Did you see the puppies that were playing around your feet while you were reading?"

"No, sir."

"Did you know that they were there?"

"Yes, sir."

"Why did you not look to see what they were doing?"

"I couldn't, sir, while I was reading what I said I would."

"Do you always do what you say you will?"

"Yes, sir, I try to."

"You are the boy I want," said the manufacturer. "Come to-morrow morning. Your wages will start at 16s., with good prospects of increase."

"This one thing I do." That was that boy's motto, and no counter-attraction could move him away from it. He was master of himself.

It was the motto of St Paul: "This one thing I do, I press toward the mark for the Prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

It was the motto of Jesus. He came to the world to do one thing—His Father's business.

Take the advice of the sun-dial. Do one thing well, rather than one hundred things left half done. Be master of yourself.

At school, in business, in the Christian life, learn to be master of yourself. You think it is easy. It is one of the most difficult things in the world. There are ever so many things in the world always seeking to master you. Wealth, position, power, popularity, pride, and pleasure —these strive for the mastery. But think of your young will reinforced with the will of Jesus. Nothing can conquer it then. So as

you submit your will to Jesus, you are more and more master of yourself in all things.

This one thing I do—seek the highest and the best. See that everything leads to the ONE THING. This one thing I do—I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. May God help you to win it. Let the shadow on the sun-dial teach you WISDOM.

XVIII

"HEAVEN IS MY GUIDE, I CANNOT GO WRONG"

"My father, thou art the guide of my youth."—JER. iii. 4.

THIS is the saying on an old-fashioned sun-dial at Eveche, Angoulême. The sun-dial claims "Heaven" as its Guide.

We have to-day many clocks and watches, from Big Ben and the grandfather clock down to the tiny wristlet watch. They are all very serviceable. But when you compare the time on them you often find that they differ from each other, and therefore all of them cannot be going right. Sometimes you see in the large cities fine clocks controlled by electric current from Greenwich, and when you compare your watch with "the right time" you find it a few seconds or perhaps a few minutes fast or slow. The works of the best watch are never perfect and they require constant regulation. Now, this is altogether different with the sun-dial. It is free from the defects of mechanism and variations in the weather. Age makes no difference on the time it records. It is always "right," for "Heaven is its Guide." I am sure you will agree that it could have no better guide.

And I want to tell you that boys and girls journeying through life can have no better guide

than heaven. God is in heaven, and it is He who really guides the sun-dial. It is He who guides us. Is it not a very wonderful thing, boys and girls, that the great God who made all things, and controls all things, should condescend to guide us?

Now there are a few reasons why boys and girls need a guide. Let me tell you.

1. You need a guide because you are inexperienced. You have a great deal to learn yet on the way of life. Suppose you were going to visit far-off Japan. You did not know anything about the country, nor could you speak the Japanese language. Would it not be advisable to get the help of a good guide?

In the old days the children of Israel did not know anything about the wilderness journey. They were inexperienced. But God guided them with a pillar of a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. Israel marvelled at the long, long, roundabout road the Guide was taking them. She had to learn to trust and obey Him. Then she saw that the Guide had a purpose in leading them the way He did, for it strengthened and disciplined them as nothing else could.

You are inexperienced, and just as you trust your father you are to trust your Guide.

2. You need a guide because the way is full of dangers. Now and again we read in the newspapers of some foolish people who set out without any experience to climb the Alps in

Switzerland. Of course, they imagine that they can do without a guide. They have climbed mountains before, although not the Alps. So, against all advice, they set out. Then they begin to realise how treacherous the climb is going to be. There are slippery places that look quite secure. There are hidden ravines over which they might easily fall. There are mists encountered. They begin to wish they had accepted the services of the guide. Not infrequently these foolish people perish in the climb. Would they not have been wiser with a good guide?

When you were just a tiny tot your mother used to take you by both hands, and gradually guide your young footsteps in the way to walk. Wasn't it good to have her guidance then? Many a time you stood up, and then you walked a bit, then you fell down. You got up again, and made a bold effort, and you might have fallen against the fire, or hurt yourself against chairs, if you had not been guided by a loving hand. Even when you were older, and could walk easily, your father occasionally had to take your hand and guide you across some busy thoroughfare where traffic was heavy.

And this life, boys and girls, is just full of dangerous places. You must be guided past these. There are dangerous swamps of dishonesty, pitfalls of falsehood, theft, gambling and betting, treacherous, slippery places of strong drink and bad companions, hidden ravines of temptation. Thousands of unwary

people have fallen into them, because they had no Guide. Seek always, boys and girls, the help and the guidance of your heavenly Father. He knows all the dangerous places. He will guide you right. He cannot go wrong.

3. And boys and girls need a Guide to point out to them not only the dangerous places, but also the beautiful and interesting places.

When we used to go on a geological excursion we had as our Guide the professor. Sometimes we saw nothing very interesting or extraordinary, until he would come and point out this rock and that rock. He would discover some fossil, and tell us the history of the district. He saw beauty where we saw the commonplace. A few words from him made a transformation, and the past thrilled with living interest.

It is just the same in life. With Him nothing is dull and commonplace. He tells you the purpose of this and the reason for that. He shows you new beauty in the fields and skies. Everything is so different and so enjoyable when He guides.

4. And, above all, He is the only Guide who knows the way to the Celestial City.

We are all travelling there. It is His Home. It is His Country. He knows all about it. He says: "I am the Way."

Surely, then, boys and girls, we are wise when we take Heaven as our Guide.

Let us, then, remember the saying on this

old-fashioned sun-dial: "Heaven is my Guide. I cannot go wrong." If we also have Heaven as our Guide, we shall never go wrong.

"In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."

XIX

"MEMENTO FINIS." 1816

"Remember the End"

"Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof."—Eccles. vii. 8.

At Ville Vallouise there is a sun-dial that asks you always to remember the end. It is a good saying, boys and girls: "Remember the End." It means whenever you set out on any course of action, pause for a moment, and reflect on what the end of it will be. If only people would always take that advice, I am sure the world would be much happier.

Well, here is the wise man of the Old Testament saying that "the end" is better than "the beginning."

You have begun another New Year. You have been wishing each other a happy New Year. Well, if it is to be a happy year, you must "Remember the End." The end of it should find you happier and better than the beginning.

I know that boys and girls usually think the opposite of the wise man's saying.

Suppose a big ship sets sail in very pleasant weather, and later in the voyage meets with a terrible storm, and gets wrecked. Would we say then that the end is better than the beginning? If you have been helping yourself at Christmas

time to more pudding than you should, I am certain you won't say the End is better than the Beginning. When you go your Sunday-School excursion, or when you get your annual holidays, is it really true that you say at the close of them —the end is better than the beginning?

Whatever can the wise man mean by his saying? He really means what he says. The end can always be better than the beginning, provided you pay attention to the sun-dial saying and "Remember the End."

Here are some ways in which you will find the saying true:—

I. Start the New Year well, by remembering the end of it. Have that in view.

Do something right away to improve yourself. Why not get one of Shakespeare's plays, such as *The Merchant of Venice*, and master it? At the end of the year you will be a wiser boy and girl. Why not make up your mind to study more of the Bible, and to learn in particular the words of Christ and the great passages in the Psalms off by heart? You will not only be wiser at the end of the year, you will be very much better. You know that some boys and girls never seem to make any progress. Others make progress, but it is in the wrong direction! I notice that when you get a nice new copy-book at school you write your name neatly on it, and you determine to do well. The first three or four pages are neat and clean, and then you seem to get tired, a little bit careless, and I find your

book showing a few blots, and the writing is not half so good as at the beginning.

Well, now, boys and girls, suppose you resolve now to "keep it up." Suppose you resolve that you will do your utmost to copy the example at the top of the page, the result will surely be that the end will be better than the beginning.

And so as you start another New Year, resolve at the beginning that you are going to copy Jesus, and you will say on 31st December, "Yes, the wise man is right—the end *is* better than the beginning." "Remember the End."

II. You will try to break off any bad habits you have, for you will remember the end of these. If you have the bad habit of laziness you will get rid of that, for lazy boys and girls grow up into lazy men and women. Laziness brings poverty, and poverty sorrow. If you have habits of falsehood, or of not being strictly honest, or of being unreliable and unpunctual, determine at all costs to be rid of them, as the end of these things is disaster. The past has been forgiven—start afresh, and "Remember the End."

III. You will always do your best.

In *Some Hawarden Letters* there is an answer which the great statesman, the late W. E. Gladstone, sent to a young inquirer for guidance in life:—

1. Rely on it that every mind has a work, and every life a purpose, which earnest, humble pains will not fail to discover.

2. Prefer reality to show.
3. Prefer the future to the present, *i.e.*, remember the end.
4. Prefer manly assiduity and application to supposed, or even real, brilliancy of natural gifts.
5. Prefer concentrated to diffused attention.
6. To know, and do, a little well rather than much superficially.
7. To cherish Reverence, not less than freedom.
8. In doubtful matters to give the doubt against yourself.
9. In all matters, to take for guide, such answer as you can best give to the question: "How would Christ have acted?"

I would not add to these nine rules the great statesman has given. Practise them, and each year will be happier and better than the last, and you will say with the wise man: "Better is the end than the beginning thereof."

XX

"CARPE DIEM"

"Snatch the day"

"As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good."—GAL. vi. 10.

DEAR boys and girls, there are ever so many sun-dials which warn us to "Seize the opportunity." "Carpe Diem" says the old sun-dial (dated 1698) at Cadder House, near Glasgow; at Brahan Castle, Ross-shire; High Street, Lewes; and at Heslington Hall, near York. On a schoolmaster's house at Leyburn, Yorks., the saying is well put in rhyme:—

"Time is, thou hast: see that thou well employ;
Time past is gone: thou canst not that enjoy.
Time future is not, and may never be;
Time present is the only time for thee."

"Fronti capillata, post est occasio calva"—"Opportunity has hair in front, and is bald behind," says the sun-dial at the school-house at Guilsborough in Northamptonshire. That means the same thing. Once opportunity has passed, you cannot catch it. Like Father Time, opportunity has only one forelock.

Shakespeare tells us that there is a tide in the affairs of men, which, when it is taken at the flood, leads on to fortune, but if it is not recognised and taken advantage of, then life in this world ever afterwards must be spent in the shallows.

So the sun-dial's teaching is wisdom—"Snatch the day." Opportunity raps some time at everyone's door. It is for boys and girls to be on the alert to take advantage of it, for that opportunity once passed is gone for ever. Spurgeon used to say: "As well recall the North Wind. As well fill again the empty rain cloud. As well bid the river roll back its flood—the opportunity once gone, returns not." "Snatch the day!" Seize the opportunity!

Some of you boys and girls will have read Charles Dickens' great masterpiece, *David Copperfield*. You should all read it. It is the story of Dickens' own life. There is in it a rather lovable character called "Micawber." He is always waiting for something to turn up. He is always hopeful it will! But somehow he always arrives just too late. The opportunity that would have brought him many blessings in life passes on. There are many boys and girls like that. You must train yourself to be on the outlook for the opportunity when the day brings it, and seize it.

It is true not only of the world, but also of religion. "Let us fear," says St Paul, "lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." The opportunity within the grasp, yet missed for all that! You must seize the day of salvation while it is offered you—to-morrow the opportunity may be gone.

And the sun-dial wants you boys and girls to seize the day while you are young. Don't let

the golden moments slip past you without taking advantage of them. The story of our successful business men is the story of opportunity seized.

But each new day that comes is like a new wave. You may have missed the opportunity to launch out on the previous one, seize the present one and launch out. "Snatch the day." Don't wait for to-morrow. There are opportunities for service, and for doing good. Don't let them slip by. I would like to finish this little talk by quoting to you a beautiful little poem. It is of a mother giving advice to her little daughter to seize the opportunity to do good:—

"I remember long ago, dear,
At the old home far away,
In the garden stood a sun-dial,
Which marked the hours day by day.
And upon the ancient time-piece
Was a legend quaint and true,
And I learned to read the lines, dear,
When a little maid like you:

'TIME IS EVER FLEETING BY,
WITH ITS SONG AND SORROW,
STRIVE TO DO SOME GOOD TO-DAY,
WAIT NOT TILL TO-MORROW.'

Think of this through life, my darling,
Strive like this from day to day,
Ev'ry heart will love and bless you,
As you journey on your way.
And our Father He has promised
That within the gates of gold,
All who here in patience serve Him,
Shall be there repaid tenfold."

"Carpe Diem!" Lay hold always on the golden opportunity for yourself, for others, for Jesus.

XXI

"SOL EST LUX ET GLORIA MUNDI"

"The Sun is the Light and Glory of the World"

"DOMINUS ILLUMINATIO MEA"

"The Lord is my Light"

"I am the light of the world."—ST JOHN viii. 12.

MANY sun-dials speak in praise of the sun. Over in La Blanque, Provence, the sun-dial reminds us that Light is the Gift of God. "FIAT LUX"—"Let there be Light," said God, and there was Light. Sometimes the sun-dial is very serious, and reminds us that the Light of the world will some day pass away. The old sun-dial at a house near Bicester says, quoting St John xii. 35: "Yet a little while is the Light with you. Walk while ye have the Light." Some sun-dials say "Lead, kindly Light." I saw one in Glasgow with the saying: "My life is the sun: God is the life of man: Man without Him, is as I am without the sun." The motto of the University of Oxford you will also find on several sun-dials: "The Lord is my Light."

Now among the many great sayings of Jesus, this is one of the greatest: "I am the Light of the World." No one ever made a claim like that before. No one has ever made such a

claim since. What the sun is to the present world, Jesus is to the spiritual world.

Let us see the meaning of that.

1. The sun is essential to the sun-dial. It is lifeless without the sun. The sun means life.

Suppose for a minute there was no sun at all in the world. There was, of course, light in the world before the sun was created. There would be light in the world still, but what a dismal place it would be to live in! There would be no trees, and plants, and grass, and flowers. There would be no beautiful colours to cheer us. We would soon have no food. We ourselves would soon pine and die. We simply could not live in the world without the warmth and light from the sun.

You see, then, boys and girls, how very important the sun is to the world.

Now, when Jesus says "I am the Light of the World," He means that He is to our souls what the sun is to our bodies.

Religion is a cold and chilly thing without Jesus.

It is a dark, dismal thing, no matter how intellectual, without Jesus. Over in Africa the heathen boys and girls live in constant dread of evil spirits. Their religion is a religion of darkness, and therefore of terror. Should we not then try to do something to send the Light to them?

And Jesus throws Light on God. People used to be terrified at the mere mention of His Name.

Jesus revealed Him as "Our Father in Heaven, who loves us."

All the great problems that perplex so many become bright when the Light of the World shines upon them.

2. The sun means Happiness.

When you are going your Sunday-School excursion, you get up early in the morning. You peer through the blinds to see what kind of morning it is. If the sun is shining brightly you run back to bed and you waken up the others—oh, the sun is shining, we're going to have a good day! You feel so happy. But if you see the sky dark with clouds, and the rain coming down in torrents, is it not the case that you feel depressed and unhappy? The sun makes all the difference.

Now, when Jesus said "I am the Light of the World," He meant the same thing. As the sun causes you to be happy, so does He. Jesus brings real happiness into your life. He fills our hearts with the sunshine of His Presence, and He greatly uplifts and blesses us.

3. The sun means Healing.

The patients in the wards in our infirmaries who are exposed to the rays of the sun, recover quicker than those in darkened wards. Many germs which destroy life flourish in the darkness, but they perish when brought into the sunshine. So Jesus, the Light of the World, heals all spiritual diseases.

4. The sun means Purity.

Many lights seem very bright and pure until they are brought into the full daylight. In the dark places you find cobwebs, and bats, and all kinds of creeping things. The air is very impure, and the smells are disagreeable. The first thing to work a transformation is to let the light in. So we need to let the Light into the darkened places of our lives where lurks many a hidden sin, and His purity will work a transformation.

5. And then the sun-dial reminds us that the sun is "the Glory of the World." That is true. How majestic the sun looks shining in the sky! No man can add to its glory, and no man can take away from it. To watch the sun set behind the Arran hills is to behold a glorious spectacle.

Well, Jesus is the glory of the spiritual world. It is true that although He was Pure and Sinless, the Jews crucified Him on the Cross as a vile malefactor. Yet the Cross did not hide His glory. His Glory shone majestically through the Cross. And what Glory shone in His face after He had conquered death! More powerful light entered the world after His Resurrection. Men began to see Light clearer on the next world. It was "Home." Jesus was there, and Jesus was crowned with glory and honour.

Now, boys and girls, Jesus says that as He is the Light of the World, so we are all the Light of the World. Isn't that wonderful? Boys and girls are to shine for Him by showing His Spirit,

copying His Example, and obeying His principles. Jesus then, the Light of the World, shines in and through you. You will shine as lights in the darkness of sin and evil of the world. No boy or girl is too poor, or small, or insignificant to shine for Jesus.

> " Jesus bids us shine with a pure, clear light,
> Like a little candle burning in the night.
> In this world of darkness, so we must shine,
> You in your small corner, and I in mine."

"I am the Light of the World"—"Ye are the Light of the World." See that you shine for Jesus.

XXII

"GOD'S PROVIDENCE IS MY INHERITANCE"

1676

"MY TIME IS IN THY HAND"

"My times are in thy hand."—Ps. xxxi. 15.

DEAR boys and girls, in a beautiful garden at Liberton, Midlothian, you will find a sun-dial with this fine saying on it. The Psalmist was a very wise man. He knew that everything is in God's hand. He holds the seas in the hollow of His hand. The sun, moon, and stars all depend upon His power. And our times are also in God's hand. We depend upon Him for our food and raiment, for shelter, for light, for heat, for air—indeed, for everything. "Le Ciel est ma Règle"—"Heaven is my Ruler," says the sun-dial at Florence, and surely that is true. God is Light, and God controls all things.

Let me tell you an Old Testament story. Long ago in the time of King Ahaz, many things were imported from Babylonia. A wonderful sun-dial was one of them. Isaiah, the prophet, tells us that once the good King Hezekiah was lying very, very sick. He was near to death's door. But he prayed to God, and God answered his prayer. God promised

to prolong his days for fifteen more years. Now, it used to be a habit amongst the Jews that when they were in doubt, they asked for a sign. Gideon no doubt trusted God, but when he was not sure, he asked for, and was granted, a sign. Hezekiah asked for a sign. This was to be the sign that he would get better, and that his enemies would be defeated. The sun-dial would go ten degrees backward. This particular sun-dial, I should have mentioned, was a wonderful one indeed. The figures were on the stairs, and the people could tell the time by watching the shadow as it touched certain points. Hezekiah would receive a sign from the sun-dial. The shadow would go back ten degrees. The king might have heard of the shadow on the dial moving forward rapidly ten degrees, but who ever heard of the shadow moving backwards ten degrees? If it did, that would be a sign. Well, it did happen. The shadow actually went back five hours! We don't need to imagine that the earth stopped still, or went backward. All that was necessary to produce the effect was to cause a change in the direction of the rays of light, so as to make them retrograde on the dial. The phenomena is not unknown in modern times. On 27th March 1703, Romauld, prior of the cloister at Metz, made the observation, that, owing to such a refraction of the solar rays in the higher regions of the atmosphere, in connection with the appearance of a cloud, the shadow on his sun-dial deviated an hour and a half. The sign to Hezekiah was sure. The

times were in the hands of God, and He would bring what He said to pass.

And the times of every boy and girl are in the hands of God. He is in control. "My time is in Thy Hand," says the sun-dial. Of course, the sun-dial must first be in the right position, so that the Light can control it. Your young life must also be in a position for God to control it. You must ask Him, and then surrender to Him.

One day a great musician was staying at a city hotel. It was afternoon, and many of the guests were enjoying tea and bright conversation. They were disturbed, however, by the noise coming from a room upstairs. It was someone trying to play the piano! The scales were being gone up and down, up and down, with a sort of jingling noise. He went upstairs, and he looked into the room, and there he saw a little girl in white sitting at the piano practising the scales. Of course, a little girl does not learn it in a week, or a year. It takes years, and constant practice. But this little girl was only starting to learn. The musician went up to her and he said, "Would you like to play the piano?" "Oh, yes," she said. "Would you like me to show you?" "Yes," she replied. So he took the girl up on to his knee, and he took her little fingers and showed her how to hold them. Then he pressed one or two of the keys. "Oh, it is wonderful," she cried, "do that over again." The great musician started to play slowly one of his great masterpieces, still holding her little

hands. Meantime what a change came over the people downstairs. Two or three ladies came upstairs to see who was playing. Then some more visitors came up, and soon there was quite a crowd. The musician smiled. "Oh!" he said, "this is the little girl who was making all the noise, but it is still the same girl who is playing." The little girl smiled, and she felt quite confident in playing so long as he held her little hands and touched the keys. You see, boys and girls, what made the difference. Wasn't it this? Her little hands were in the hands of a great master!

Now, when we say "My time is in Thy Hand," we mean just the same. We put our life, as that little girl put her hands, into the Hands of the Great Master.

When you do that, boys and girls, the Master takes control, and He has promised to make your life "one grand, sweet song." May you then be able to say with the sun-dial, "My time is in Thy Hand."

XXIII

(1) "AMYDDST YE FLOWERS I TELL YE HOURES"

(2) "EGO CERTAS, LILIA FAUSTAS"

"I make the hours sure, the lilies make them fortunate"

"Consider the lilies."—ST MATT. vi. 28.

WHERE do you think, boys and girls, that a sun-dial is to be most frequently found? Why, in a garden, of course! The sun-dial is very useful, not only in telling the time, but in adorning the garden. It looks very stately standing amidst the flowers.

At Camurat, in France, the owner of a splendid sun-dial has engraved on it: "I make the hours sure, the lilies make them fortunate."

We will therefore have this little talk about the flowers.

Whilst you are looking at the time on the sun-dial, the flowers fill the air with sweet fragrance.

1. So the Hours should be Fragrant.

There was once a Scottish missionary who worked for many, many years in far-off Japan. In the evening of his life he returned again to this country. The Japanese, however, did not forget him. They were so very grateful to him for all his labour of love in connection with

hospitals, schools, and in preaching the Gospel, that when any Japanese of note visited Glasgow, they invariably made a point of including in their programme a visit to their friend, the old missionary. One morning a member of the Mikado's family came, incognito, with his suite to see the missionary. They had a long friendly talk, and then left. That same evening the missionary was visited by another Japanese. He began to sniff the air. "Oh, you've had visitors to-day?" "Yes," said the missionary. "Japanese?" "Yes." "Royalty?" "Yes. But pray tell me how you know?" asked the old man. "Oh, I smelled them when I entered your door," answered the Jap. "You know that the Imperial family of Japan use a certain sweet ointment, and no other is permitted to use it, no matter what his wealth or title may be."

Wasn't that very good? You see, boys and girls, a member of the royal household was known by the royal fragrance.

Well, Christian boys and girls are also known by their fragrance. It is a royal fragrance, for it is the fragrance of King Jesus. Have Him in your heart, let His thoughts fill your mind, and His Love be your love, and the hours you record will be fragrant as the lilies.

2. The Hours should be Pure.

The lily is wonderfully pure, no matter what soil it grows in.

A Glasgow minister received a call to a church

in England in one of the coal-fields' districts. One day passing by he saw great heaps of coal-dust, and right beside them beautiful little white flowers growing. He had seen them before, but he never paid any attention to them. This day the thought struck him—how can these little flowers keep so beautiful, pure, and white, growing in such an atmosphere, where soot and dust are continually falling around them? It was puzzling. He pulled one, and then he saw the secret. Each flower had a little coat of clear substance, which acted like enamel to the petals of the flower! Whenever any dust fell on it, it simply rolled off, or if it happened to stick, the first shower of rain washed it off. Thus the flowers were always beautiful, pure, and white. They were protected.

Well, we are protected too, boys and girls. We have the Grace of Jesus, which acts like a shield over our hearts, protecting them from all manner of dust of sin and evil.

Have His protecting Grace, boys and girls, and the hours of your life, like the hours of the flowers, will be pure.

3. The Hours should be Useful.

"Amidst the flowers I tell the hours," says the sun-dial. Both are useful—the sun-dial and the flowers. One is useful to tell the time, the other to beautify the garden. How useful flowers may be! Flowers brighten up the sick-room. Flowers beautify the church and the home. Flowers comfort those who mourn.

Flowers cheer us when we are depressed. Flowers tell us of God's Love and Care. Flowers are especially welcome after the cold winter. They tell us of Easter time, and the Resurrection.

" The little flowers come from the ground
At Easter time, at Easter time;
They raise their heads and look around
At happy Easter time.

And every little flower doth say,
' Be glad and full of joy to-day,
For all that sleep shall wake again
And spend a long, glad Easter day.' "

There are many uses for flowers too numerous to mention. Some flowers in the garden are large and have bright colours. Some flowers are very small and have nothing showy about them. Some are very shy, but very fragrant. There are all kinds of flowers growing around the sun-dial, and it is very proud to be working amidst such beauty.

Now, as God has a use for every flower, so He has a use for every boy and girl. He has some place in this big, busy world which you alone can fill. Fill the hours with usefulness.

The sun-dial considers itself fortunate in being thus placed amidst the flowers to tell the hours. You will be fortunate, too, if you grow in the Garden of your Life the beautiful flowers that are fragrant, the flowers of grace, and the flowers of usefulness.

XXIV

"HOC AGE LUMEN ADEST"

"Be diligent while the light abides"

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."—ROM. xii. 11.

A LARGE number of sun-dials advise us to be diligent. "Be diligent, while the light abides," is on the sun-dial on a gable of the parish church at Chirnside.

"He that would thrive must rise at FIVE.
He that hath thriven may stay till SEVEN.
He that will never thrive may lie till ELEVEN."

This saying in rhyme is on the sun-dial at Stanwardine-in-the-Fields, near Baschurch.

"Diligite diligentiam in munere vestro"—"Love diligence in your office," is the saying on the dial at the large hospital in Milan.

There are many more all in the same strain—"Be diligent!"

St Paul was diligent. He never did anything in a half-hearted fashion. This was one of his great mottoes that every boy and girl would do well to adopt: "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."

The prizes of life are given to those who win them, not by "luck," but by labour and diligence.

1. "Not slothful in business."

(*a*) "Be Diligent."

I wonder if you yawn over your lessons, and look upon them as so much drudgery that must be got through, the sooner the better?

I wonder when mother asks you to run a message how long you take on the road?

I wonder if it is hard for you to get up early in the morning?

The late Mr H. H. Asquith, who was Prime Minister of this country, said that one of the sights in Glasgow that vexed and perplexed him was the sight of crowds of young lads loafing about street corners, and boys he noticed sitting slothfully on the end of some lorry with their legs dangling, while they were reading some "penny horrible!"

Is it not a remarkable thing that Jesus, ever Himself a diligent worker, chose His disciples not from the leisured classes of the day, but from the busy workers? He does the same to-day. You will find as you grow older that the people who do most for Jesus and His Church are those who are busiest with their own work.

Always, boys and girls, be busy. Diligent at your work, diligent in the home, diligent in church. You can't start too young. Listen to this. John Stuart Mill, when he was only three years old, was initiated into the Greek language by his stern father!

Isaac Watts, who wrote some of our beautiful hymns we sing in church, could read the Bible

when he was three years of age. If he received any money for being a good boy, he would come running home crying "A book, a book! Buy a book!" Imagine that at three years of age.

Jonathan Swift could read any chapter in the Bible when he was three years of age.

Charles Kingsley preached a children's sermon when he was only four years of age, imitating the minister remarkably well. When he was five years of age he wrote several poems of great skill.

Mozart, the world-famous musician, composed melodies at four years of age, which his father wrote down from his dictation. When he was little more than five, he took part in a comedy that was performed in the Hall of the University of Salzburg.

Young Patterson was able to read at five years of age, and received on his fifth birthday the present of a Bible from his father. He read it eagerly, puzzled his brains as to what became of the fish during the Flood, and once, when suddenly called to the nursery, begged to be allowed to "finish the binding of Satan for a thousand years."

You think these are remarkable statements. Every one of them has been verified by the late Robertson Nicoll.

" Be diligent "—start when you are young.

(*b*) Don't neglect little things.

One feature of the slothful is that they invariably try to do only the big things, and

they neglect the little things that don't count very much, as they imagine. But the negligent make a great mistake. Listen to this little poem:—

"For want of a nail, the shoe was lost;
For want of a shoe, the horse was lost;
For want of a horse, the rider was lost;
For want of the rider, the battle was lost;
For want of the battle, the kingdom was lost—
And all for the want of a horse-shoe nail."

If you will be wise then, boys and girls, you will BE DILIGENT. Don't be slothful in the business of life. There's plenty of work in the world, in the church, at home, in business, and you're here to do it. Be not slothful in business.

2. Be "Fervent in Spirit."

I wonder what led David Livingstone to go to Africa? When his work was done he had completed a map of Africa. He had crossed it four times, up to the arm-pits in water, over deserts, endured twenty-seven attacks of fever, was surrounded with enemies on every side, faced mutiny, poisoned arrows, wild beasts, bites of serpents, and many sufferings. What enabled him to do it? It was quenchless enthusiasm—fervency of spirit.

What was the difference between Christopher Columbus and his crew on their voyage of discovery? Simply this: Columbus was "fervent in spirit," and that led him on, and on, when the others were ready to mutiny and give all up as hopeless.

King Robert the Bruce won despite his many

sets-back, because of his "bubbling-over enthusiasm."

Be enthusiastic—fervent in spirit.

The boys and girls who win the prizes at school and later in life, are those who have enthusiasm for the subject in hand.

I like boys and girls who are enthusiastic. I like them even when they are wrong! I am sure Jesus liked Paul even when Paul (Saul) was wrong and persecuted the Christians. He loved him because of his enthusiasm.

Whatever work you take up—Boys' Brigade, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Girls' Auxiliary, or any work at all for Jesus and His Church, do it with all your might—be enthusiastic. Do the same in business—it leads to good success. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

3. "Serving the Lord."

That was the Apostle's ambition—to serve Jesus. He asked no higher honour in this life, than to be a servant to such a good Master as Jesus.

But, you say, if I could see Him and speak to Him I would serve Him. Listen again. Jesus says: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, ye have done it unto me."

You know some little boy or girl not so well off as you are. You have some toy you are finished playing with. Why not take a run down, and give that toy to a poor boy or girl, and see how happy you can make them! That is serving Jesus.

You know someone who is lying sick. Why not go and see them? Take them some little comfort. Speak kindly to them. Cheer them up. That is serving Jesus.

You know that there are millions of heathen boys and girls who have never heard the name of Jesus, and who are unhappy. Why not help by giving your penny to the Foreign Mission Box? That is serving Jesus.

To do good to anyone in Christ's name is to serve Christ.

"Somebody did a golden deed;
Somebody proved a friend in need;
Somebody sang a beautiful song;
Somebody smiled the whole day long;
Somebody thought, 'Tis sweet to live';
Somebody said, 'I'm glad to give';
Somebody fought a valiant fight;
Somebody lived to shield the right—
Was that somebody you?"

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord." Be diligent while the light abides.

XXV

"JE VOUS LA SOUHAITE HEUREUSE." 1810

"May this moment be a happy one for you"

"JUBILATE DEO"—"Rejoice in God"

"The joy of thy lord."—ST MATT. xxv. 21.

THE first saying is on a very old sun-dial at Albi, the second one on a sun-dial in the garden at Elm Hall, Wanstead, Essex.

Both speak of "Happiness," so we will make that the subject of our little talk.

Some boys and girls have a wrong notion of what happiness is. They imagine that they would be ever so happy if they had only lots of toys—engines, aeroplanes, dolls, and games. Others think they would be so happy if the whole year round were one long holiday. Other boys and girls imagine they would be happy if they had no school to attend, and no difficult lessons to learn. Others again think they would be happy if they could always get as many cakes and sweets as they liked. So you see, there are all sorts of notions as to what constitutes happiness.

Let me tell you that happiness is independent of these things. To be happy you must be:—

1. Content.

There is a fable about a canary and a gold-fish.

They were together in the same room. One hot day the master of the house heard the fish complaining of his dumb condition, and envying the sweet song of his companion overhead: "Oh, I wish I could sing as sweetly as my friend up there." It wasn't happy because it could not do what the canary was doing. Strange to say, the canary at the same moment was eyeing the inhabitant of the globe: "How cool it looks! I wish my lot were there." It was not happy because it could not swim about in the cool water on that hot summer's day. The master overheard them. "So then it shall be," he said. He lifted out the fish with one hand, and the canary with the other. The fish started to pant for breath, and was nearly dead! The canary looked at its pretty feathers dripping with water, and it was almost drowned! At once both of them saw their folly, and they repented of their discontent. They saw that their happiness lay in being contented with what they were fitted for, and not in envying each other. If we would be happy, boys and girls, let us be contented by making the most of our circumstances, and of our talents. "I have learned," says the Apostle, "in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be CONTENT."

2. Love.

Boys and girls who don't love are always selfish, and selfish boys and girls can never be happy. It doesn't matter whether you live in a palace, or in a cottage. It doesn't matter

whether you are wealthy or poor. If you are selfish, you cannot possibly be happy.

Jesus was the most unselfish man who ever lived, and He was the happiest. Love others as He did, and you will be happy too.

When Mazzini, one of the greatest men who ever lived, first started to walk, his mother took his hand and took him out for his first walk. They were passing a church when they saw a poor old man sitting begging on the steps. The child suddenly stood still, and his mother, thinking that he was frightened at the white beard and the rags of the old man, stooped down to carry him away. But he broke away from her, and toddling over to the old man, he threw his little arms affectionately round his neck, and kissed him again and again. "Oh, mother!" he cried, "give him something, give him something!"

The old man was greatly touched, and addressing Signora Mazzini, he said, "Love him well, lady; he is one who will love the people."

As the boy, so the man. Mazzini grew up to be a great lover of others, and he was a supremely happy man.

If boys and girls would be happy let them love others.

3. Serve.

Jesus was ever so happy because He was the Servant of all. He was always urging people to serve. Forget about self, and serve. Mother, I am sure, is never happier than when she is

serving those she loves. Just you try it. Try to help others not so clever as you are with their lessons. Try to be always busy helping with the household duties. See if there is anything you can do about the Church. Serve, that is the way to happiness.

4. A Christian.

Everything I have said is summed up in the word "Christian." No one is truly happy but the Christian. To be with Christ, no matter what your circumstances may be, no matter whether in health or in sickness, is to be truly happy.

Robert Burns expressed the truth long ago when he said that happiness depended on something not outside, but something inside.

> "It's no' in honour, nor in rank,
> It's no' in wealth like London bank—
> To purchase peace, and rest content.
> If happiness hae not her seat and centre in the breast,
> We may be wise, we may be great, but never can be blest."

The old sun-dial says: "May this moment be a happy one for you." It will be if you have Jesus.

May each year find you increasingly happy, and the happiest of all be when you enter into "the Joy of the Lord."

XXVI

REDEEM YE TIME"

"Redeeming the time."—EPH. v. 16.

AT Skelton, the sun-dial, dated 1849, says: "Redeem the Time."

That seems, boys and girls, a strange saying. "To redeem" means "to buy back," or "to pay a ransom for." It seems to contradict the sayings of so many other sun-dials. For instance, a sun-dial at Pisa says: "Irreparabile Tempus"—"Time cannot be retrieved"; and that at Little Milton Vicarage, Oxford: "Irrevocabile"—"Time cannot be recalled." At Newhall, near Penicuik, it says:—

> "Observe how fast, Time hurries past,
> Then use each hour, while in your power,
> For comes the sun, but Time flies on,
> Proceeding ever, returning never."

Another sun-dial says:—

> "The hour thou readest now on me,
> Will never more be offered thee:
> If thou tak'st heed, wise thou wilt be."

These latter sayings are all true. The moments and the years of your life that are by, are by, and you can never get them back again. Not all the money in the world can buy them back. Queen Elizabeth is reported to have

cried out to her physicians at the end of her life, "A million for a moment of time." But no one can buy time. Time is the gift of God. And indeed all the great gifts of God are without price. The air we breathe, the beautiful sky, light, the beauty of woodland and mountains, the golden sunset, salvation—these, and many other gifts, cannot be bought.

Surely, then, the sun-dial has a strange message when it says "Redeem the Time." What can it mean?

Try, boys and girls, to imagine a group of business men. They are all keen. They are eager for some opportunity. One man suddenly sees his chance, and he bids for it. He makes a great gain. Another sees his chance, and he does the same. Now, imagine that we are all business men engaged in the business of Christianity. The days, as Paul says, are evil. But it is up to us to be keen in trying to win them for Christ. We are to buy them back for Christ. Now, how can we do that?

I. By Goodness.

That is how Jesus did it in His day. He went about doing good.

During the days of the terrible Revolution in France, Queen Marie Antoinette was discrowned and cast into a vile prison-house. She was of a very gentle disposition, and she suffered greatly. One of the rough soldiers, who stood by, saw the Queen's misery. He watched her sad face, and his soul was filled with pity.

During the hot days of summer he would go and buy her fruit from one of the near-by fruit-sellers. One day he told the woman whom the fruit was for, and the woman picked the very best fruit on the stall and handed it to him. "Ah well," she said, "this, one woman at least can do for another. I won't take payment for it." The action of the soldier and of that woman was a good action, and it helped in those evil days to redeem the time. Redeem the time, boys and girls, by always doing all the good you can. Look out for opportunities, and you will be sure to find them.

II. By Faithfulness.

In Edinburgh there is a small monument erected to the memory of a faithful dog called "Bobby." When its master died it attended the funeral to Greyfriars Churchyard, and when all the other mourners left, the dog refused to go. It lay mourning on its master's grave. People saw the poor animal, and they tried to entice it away, and indeed they would have given it another good home, but the faithful animal refused to leave. It kept guard over that grave. Little boys and girls coming home from school used to bring him scraps of food, but no one could persuade him to desert his dead master. If anyone tried to force him, he looked at them so savagely, that they knew it was best to leave him alone. One day, after four years, the boys and girls brought his food as usual, and they found him in the usual place,

lying stretched across his master's grave, but he was cold and dead. The faithfulness of the dog came to the ears of a baroness, who built a monument, in the shape of a drinking-fountain for dogs, to his memory.

You see how faithful a dog can be! You can be faithful too. It is a splendid way to redeem the time. Be faithful to Christ, to His commands, and to His Church, and you will help to win all the days for Him.

III. Here are ten Golden Rules to redeem the time:—

1. Be Honest. There are so many dishonest people in the world that you will find it hard to be strictly honest. Make this a rule of your life, that Honesty is not only the "best" policy, but the ONLY ONE.
2. Be Generous. Meanness makes enemies. The generous boy and girl make friends for Christ.
3. Be Polite. Every smile, every kind word helps to win friends and the days for Christ.
4. Keep your Word. If you promise to be at a certain place at a certain time, be there a minute before time if you have to lose your dinner to do it.
5. Trust in God. Inscribe on your banner: "Luck is a fool, pluck is a hero."
6. Do the Right. No matter what the consequences—do the right, and stick up for it.

7. Be Conscientious. In the discharge of your duties be conscientious. Do your work thoroughly. No boy and girl will ever reach the top, or redeem the time, who slight their work. Remember the world watches the actions of the Christian more during the week-days than on Sunday.
8. Be Independent. Think for yourself. Don't lean on others. Conquer your difficulties.
9. Work Hard. Men and women who have got on in life, and helped the world, have been hard workers. The slothful, the malingerers, the idle, never help to redeem the time.
10. Be Christlike. Overcome evil with good. Keep your temper. Be pure. Love, and be lovable. Do everything, every day, for the glory of God.

So then, dear boys and girls, you will be helping to redeem the time, to win all the days for Christ.

XXVII

"JE SUIS JUSTE, SOYEZ LE AUSSI." 1811

"I am true, be ye true likewise"

"I am the truth."—St John xiv. 6.

The saying on this sun-dial in Savoy, France, "I am true, be ye true likewise," is a timely reminder.

To be "true" is to be "right," and "real," "honest," and "faithful." A "true" circle is a circle that is perfectly round. We talk of a "true" companion, and of a "true" leader.

The danger nowadays is for boys and girls not to be strictly true.

Wouldn't it be fine if someone said of you, he is a true gentleman, she is a true lady.

I heard recently a little story about John G. Paton, the famous missionary to New Hebrides. He had returned to Glasgow, and a Civic reception was given him. When he arrived at Queen Street Station it was a very cold, wet night, and he hired a cab to take him to the hall. When he arrived he paid his fare, and tipped the old cabby, and then he said, "Thank you for driving me safely through the busy streets." After he had gone in, the cabby asked an attendant who he was. "That is the great John G. Paton," he said; "that's the man they are all met to honour to-night." "Well,"

said the old cabby, "I've been driving cabs in Glasgow for over forty years, and that's the first time ever I was thanked! That man is a true gentleman."

The old cab-driver was right. Be right in everything, including courtesy, and you will be a true lady or gentleman.

A true lady or gentleman, of course, will always speak the Truth. That is sometimes difficult. Never mind. You determine that you are going always to be "true" in everything, and you will be rewarded with a good conscience. Remember that Jesus was the first true gentleman, and if you are like Him you will "ring true."

Prize, boys and girls, the Truth. It is as Chaucer says, the highest thing that we can keep. It is a treasure beyond price. Be true.

> "—This above all,—To thine own self be true;
> And it must follow, as the night the day,
> Thou canst not then be false to any man."

XXVIII

(1) "DO THY WORK CHEERFULLY"

(2) "TO THEM THAT MOURN THE HOURS ARE SLOW,
BUT WITH THE JOYFUL SWIFTLY GO"

"A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance."—PROV. xv. 13.

THE first saying is on an English sun-dial, the second one on a French sun-dial.

When you are sad, the hours seem to be long in passing. When you are cheerful, they seem to slip by too quickly. I am sure we don't like people who are dour, stubborn, and glum. You will find as you grow older, boys and girls, that the world likes cheerful people. The cheery, good-natured traveller always gets on very much better than the dour one, for nobody likes to meet the latter. The cheery traveller has always a cheery word and a cheery smile, and he often gets an order when the other man doesn't.

I was listening to some very young children singing a short chorus entitled "Cheer up." It was written by an evangelist in Scotland. He was on his way to his work one morning, and was feeling very depressed and sad, when suddenly a little sparrow came hopping out on to the way as if to meet him. It started to

chirrup, chirrup! You know the song of the common sparrow, and it seemed to him to be saying "Cheer-up, cheer-up!" That was how the chorus "Cheer up" came to be written. And the sun-dial wants you to "Cheer up."

You have some pretty hard lessons at school. Yes. Well, why be glum about them? You will learn them easier and quicker if you face them with a smiling countenance. "Give me the man who sings at his work," says Thomas Carlyle; "he will do more, he will do it better, and he will persevere the longer."

When you little girls have to wash up the tea-dishes, or put on a fire, or do a bit of sewing; or when you little boys are asked to stop playing some game and run to post a letter, or go some errand down town, why look as if you had just partaken of some sour grapes? Run and work with a song on your lips, and you, and everything about you, will be brighter. Do thy work cheerfully. It is good advice.

"Nobody likes to hear you sigh,
People have troubles enough to try;
Make this your motto, as days go by—
Keep smiling!

Nobody likes a frown, 'tis true,
Smiles are contagious—and sunbeams too;
Keep a bright face—and, whatever you do—
Keep smiling!

Somebody's days you will make more bright,
Somebody's load will be made so light;
You will be happier every night—
Keep smiling!

Somebody's blessing will on you rest,
You will be always a welcome guest ;
Blessing the sad ones, you will be blest—
Keep smiling !

Do thy work cheerfully.

XXIX

"NAE MAN CAN TETHER TIME OR TIDE"

"Let us go on unto perfection."—HEB. vi. 1.

THERE is a very fine sun-dial erected by Lord Torphichen at Calder Hall, which has a saying from *Tam o' Shanter* by Robert Burns—"Nae man can tether time or tide." King Canute could not keep back the rising tide, and it would be as foolish for anyone to try and keep back time. "I stay for no man," says the sun-dial on a house at Colley-Weston, Northants, and that is beyond dispute. Time is always moving on, and on, and on. And you boys and girls are also moving on with time. The question is whither?

Sometimes you look back at your old lesson books, and you recollect how difficult the lessons were! You had difficulty in spelling out each letter and pronouncing each word. It was a great achievement when you were able to read a sentence and then a short story. You don't think anything about that now, for you have moved on a long way since then. It is the same with your writing and arithmetic. You have also grown bigger in every way. You have been making progress all along the line. Has your progress been towards Perfection?

Now there was only One who was ever

perfect—Jesus; and yet He grew to that perfection. His was a constant progress. How can you make constant progress?

1. By growing in Grace.

Read the Bible. It is in itself a liberal education. Jesus knew well the Scriptures. As time moves on you will have made good progress.

Pray. God is your Father, and you are to speak to Him. He is not too busy to listen to you. He wants you to speak to Him about what concerns you most. I know of no better way of becoming spiritual than by speaking to God. Try it. There was once a little girl scarcely three years old, but how she could speak to God, and she made good progress every day! One night before lying down, after praying for papa, mamma, and her nurse by name, she prayed with the same solemnity, "O God, open little pussy's eyes, and make its tail grow." It wasn't wrong for such a little girl, for she was growing, and that little girl became a very good and beautiful woman. Speak often, boys and girls, to God. You will grow in Grace.

2. Increase in Wisdom.

You remember that Jesus increased in stature. He grew up to be a fine, strong, ruddy lad. But He increased in Wisdom also. Some boys and girls grow bigger every day in body, but they don't grow bigger in wisdom. The heathen boys and girls make little, if any, progress in knowledge and wisdom. They do the same things in exactly the same way as their fathers

did, and as their forefathers did thousands of years ago. Be wise, boys and girls, grow daily in wisdom.

Jesus was a wise boy because He obeyed His parents. He was subject to them. Some boys, and girls too, think that, as time moves on, they should throw off the yoke of their parents. That is a mistake.

Then the wise boy and girl put their heart into their lessons. The wise boy, and girl too, these days, never smoke. They never gamble. They take the pledge never to take any alcoholic liquor as a beverage. Just mark that boy and girl. They will get on. They will grow up to be good and useful members of society, a blessing to their parents, to the Church, and to everyone who comes into contact with them.

Time is moving us all on. May we all be moving towards "Perfection."

XXX

"QUOD TIBI FIERI NON VIS ALTERI NE FECERIS"

"Do not render evil for good"

"LET NOT THE SUN GO DOWN UPON YOUR WRATH"

"Overcome evil with good."—ROM. xii. 21.

THESE two sayings, boys and girls, are on small sun-dials known as "Bible-Dials." The sun-dials are made the same shape as a book, and there is usually a figure in the attitude of prayer at the bottom.

Learn not to be quarrelsome. Learn to be forgiving. On a house in the Rue d'Antibes, Cannes, and also at Noves, a circular sun-dial is surmounted by a gaily painted cock. "Je Chanterai Quand Tu Sonneras" ("I will crow when thou wilt strike"), says the cock to the sun-dial, trying, you see, to irritate the sun-dial. The sun-dial can't strike the hours—well, neither can the cock on the sun-dial crow! Don't be quarrelsome. When someone says nasty things about you that aren't true, or when they quarrel with you, don't adopt the tit-for-tat policy. There is a better way to punish them, and that is to overcome evil with good. The classical example is that of Joseph in the Old Testament. His brothers called him names, and

they ill-treated him. They finally sold him into slavery. One day it was in Joseph's power to pay them back. But what did he do? Did he render evil for evil? No. He rendered good for evil.

There was Jesus. Would not the Jews have been wise if they had paid attention to the saying on this sun-dial? Jesus healed their sick. He went about preaching the Gospel, and doing good to all. But the Jews rendered evil for good. They mocked Him. They spat on Him. They crucified the One who did them most good. How did Jesus answer them? Should He not have been very angry? No. He asked God, His Father, to forgive them.

Now, boys and girls, do not forget the wisdom of this sun-dial. Never let the sun go down upon your wrath. If you have had a quarrel with anyone, try to be friends with him before sunset. Do not render evil for evil, nor evil for good, but overcome evil with good.

XXXI

"ICH DIEN"
"I Serve"

"Are there not twelve hours in the day?"—
ST JOHN xi. 9.

THE sun-dial at Menwith Hill, Darley, Yorks., says that it serves us. So it does. When the sun shines it tells us the hours of the day. Let it serve us further by showing to us the hours one by one, and let us see what each hour reminds us of!

ONE.—This puts us in mind of the first great Commandment: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

There is "One body, one Spirit, one hope,
One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
ONE GOD."

TWO.—Two puts us in mind of Christ's teaching. There are two ways of doing a thing—a right way and a wrong way. There are TWO WAYS—a broad way and a narrow way. Jesus saw the widow's TWO mites which she cast into the treasury. It was all that she had. He taught us God's care for us by referring to TWO sparrows that were sold for a farthing. God cared for them. He referred to TWO houses. One was

built on sand, the other on a rock. The storm soon tested them. We are to build on Christ, the sure Rock. He spoke of two classes only—the saved and the unsaved. The second hour reminds us of Christ's second coming. Watch!

THREE.—This hour reminds us that there are three graces—Faith, Hope, and Love. It reminds us that the Master had three great friends, Martha and Mary, and their brother Lazarus. Be a little friend of Jesus.

FOUR.—Our Lord first called four disciples—Simon Peter, Andrew, James, and John. We read in the first chapter of Daniel of four noble youths. Be noble.

FIVE.—The fifth hour always reminds us of service. A little lad served Jesus with five barley loaves, and helped to feed the five thousand. "Ich Dien"—make it your motto.

SIX.—There were six cities of Refuge. Any guilty person who was being pursued was safe once he entered a city of Refuge. We have a Refuge in Christ.

SEVEN.—In the wisdom of God, He divided the week into seven days. Six days are for labour and pleasure, the seventh is to be devoted to God. The Jewish Sabbath commemorated the Creation. God rested on the seventh day. The Christian Sabbath, or Lord's Day, commemorates the Resurrection, the first day of the week.

EIGHT.—At the time of the great Flood eight

persons who obeyed were saved in the Ark. Learn to obey God.

NINE.—Out of ten lepers healed by Jesus, nine of them forgot to return to thank Him. Wasn't that very ungrateful? Always be grateful for every blessing.

TEN.—This hour reminds us of the Ten Commandments, all of which we must keep. It reminds us of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise, and five foolish. It teaches us to be prepared, so to live every day that should Christ, the Bridegroom, come at any moment, He will find us ready to receive Him.

ELEVEN.—The eleventh hour reminds us of the Eleventh Commandment. "I thought," you say, "a minute ago, that you said there were only Ten Commandments!" True enough. But Jesus added a new one—the Eleventh. "A new commandment," He says, "I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." If you love Christ, of course, you will keep all the other ten, so the Eleventh Commandment is surely the greatest, and best.

TWELVE.—There were twelve tribes of Israel. There were twelve gates into the heavenly city. There were twelve apostles.

So we must thank this sun-dial for serving us by reminding us of these great truths from the Bible. They contain wisdom, and happy is the boy or girl who finds wisdom.

XXXII

"IMITONS LE, TRAVAILLONS SANS RELÂCHE"

"Let us imitate (the sun), let us work unceasingly."

"Follow me."—ST MATT. iv. 19.

AT Quinsons (Basses Alpes), a very old sun-dial has this quaint saying. It advises us to imitate the sun by working unceasingly.

Boys and girls are all fond of imitating.

The other day at the seashore I saw three little girls coming towards the sea. I noticed they had something hidden in their pinafores. When they thought I was not looking, they each brought out their doll, and taking off its shoes and stockings, they began to wade them out into the sea, talking to them all the time. Wasn't that delightful! You see, they were imitating what their own mothers used to do with them!

You have seen boys and girls imitating the teacher at school, while a few others composed the class. How well they could do it!

Jesus often watched the children in the market-place playing their games of imitation.

Boys like to imitate a driver, while another boy acts as the horse. Girls like to imitate a nurse, or mother out shopping.

I was reading of some boys and girls, brothers and sisters, who were playing at "a house." The oldest girl imitated the mother, and the

oldest boy the father, and the others the children. The father and mother were greatly amused. But when the boy, imitating his father, came in "drunk," and started to abuse "mother" and "the children," the father saw things in a new light, and it led to his taking a pledge of total abstinence.

In the newspapers the other day we read that three boys had run away from home! No one could find them for a long time although dozens were out searching. The parents were in a great state of anxiety. Where could they be? At last they were found in a cave with belts on them, and toy pistols imitating some outlaws they had seen on the pictures!

You all know from that what "Imitation" means. Now, Jesus says "Follow Me." Just as in your game of "Follow my lead" you do exactly what the leader in front of you does, crossing a street, jumping over some step, measuring your steps, knocking at some part of the wall, and so on, so you are to follow Jesus in everything. Wherever He leads, you are to follow. You are to imitate Him. Whenever you are in any doubt about anything, you are to ask yourself, "What would Jesus do here?" and then imitate what you think He would do.

Boys and girls become remarkably like those they imitate in character. So as the years go on, as you keep imitating Christ's character, you will grow like Him. What better could be desired?

This is therefore another wise saying on the old sun-dial—"Imitate"—let it be Christ you decide on.

XXXIII

"NUNC EX PRAETERITO DISCAS"

"Now mayst thou learn from the past"

"Thou shalt remember—the PAST."—DEUT. xxiv. 22.

Boys and girls going to and coming from Warrington School are acquainted with the saying on the old sun-dial: "Now mayst thou learn from the past."

You know that almost everything we have and everything we have learned is from the PAST. We are great debtors to the past. Out of all the words you read and speak, how many are your own? Probably not one. Your education, your habits and customs, have all been learned from the past.

And when we observe the past closely, we can learn a great deal. We can see that such things as wars are folly, and futile as a means of settling disputes. The past made many blunders and we can profit by the lessons. A ship was wrecked somewhere on a rock, and the future mariner has the advantage of seeing a lighthouse at that spot. Science has advanced step by step, learning from the past. The business man has built up his business through experience gained from the past.

It is the same in religion. We know a great deal more about God, and about Jesus and His

Teaching, than our forefathers, for we have the testimony of accumulated experience in addition to our own.

Now there is one lesson in particular that I should like you to learn from the past. It is that skill, hard work, and perseverance lead on to greatness, and often to fortune.

Think, for instance, of several great men of the past who have won fame and fortune. Æsop, Publius Syrus, Terence, and Epictetus, all distinguished men in ancient times, were once serfs. One of the greatest of the Greek philosophers was Protagoras. He was at first a common porter. You sometimes come across wise sayings with the name "Cleanthes" at the end of them. Cleanthes first earned his living by drawing water and carrying burdens. Professor Heyne, of Gottingen, one of the world's greatest classical scholars, was the son of a poor weaver, and for many years had to struggle with the most depressing poverty. But plodding and hard work won in the end. Bandoccin, one of the learned men of the sixteenth century, was the son of a shoemaker, and had to work for many years at shoemaking. Gelli, a celebrated Italian writer and lecturer, was a tailor by trade; and Abbot, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was the son of a poor cloth-worker at Guildford. Akenside, the famous author of *Pleasures of the Imagination*, was the son of a butcher in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, while the great French mathematician, D'Alembert, was left at the steps of a church by his poor parents, and

brought up by a woman as a foundling. He never forgot or abandoned his nurse. Amyot, a great French author, whose version of *Plutarch* is well known, was at first so very poor as to be unable to afford oil or candles to assist his studies, which he had to carry on by fire-light.

I need not refer to many modern men like David Livingstone, and Carey, or Robert Burns, who rose to greatness, triumphing over their circumstances.

None of these great men had half the advantages that boys and girls have to-day. But they won through by pluck, skill, and hard work. "Luck" wasn't in their vocabulary.

Now, that is the lesson for boys and girls, especially to learn from the past. So many young people to-day are relying on some possible stroke of good fortune to bring to them fortune and greatness. They will wait in vain. These things will only come through pluck, skill, and hard work. It is the way of the world.

It is the same in the religious world. You are not called on to any easy life. Christ calls you to a hard life. You are to work out your Salvation, and that is a difficult thing to do under modern conditions. You are called to a great adventure! The prize is for those who will not be afraid to fight for it.

I wonder if you remember that passage in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* that has always thrilled me. He says: "I saw also that the Interpreter took him again by the hand, and led him into a pleasant place where was built a stately

palace beautiful to behold; at the sight of which Christian was greatly delighted. He saw also upon the top thereof, certain persons walking, who were clothed all in gold. Then said Christian, 'May we go in?' Then the Interpreter took him and led him up towards the door of the Palace, and behold, at the door stood a great company of men wanting to go in, but not daring. There also sat a man, near the door, at a table, with a book and his ink-horn before him, to take the name of him that would enter. He saw, also, that in the doorway stood many men in armour to keep it, and to hurt the men that would enter, and so the men were afraid to go in.

"At last Christian saw a brave man come up to the table, saying, 'Set down my name, sir.' Then he drew his sword, put his helmet on, and rushed toward the door and fought the armed men who tried to keep him out. So, after he had given and received many wounds, he cut his way through and got into the palace. Then Christian heard a pleasant voice of those that were within saying, 'Come in, come in, Eternal glory thou shalt win.' So he went in, and was clothed in shining garments."

How true these words are. We know the "way in" is difficult. Have you the pluck, the perseverance, the determination to work hard, and thus to win the Prizes of Life? Do I hear some little boy and girl saying just now, "Set down my name, Sir!"

" ' Little by little,' said a thoughtful boy,
' Moment by moment, I'll well employ,
Learning a little every day,
And not spending all my time in play.
And still this rule in my mind shall dwell—
" Whatever I do, I'll do it well."
Little by little, I'll learn to know
The treasured wisdom of long ago ;
And one of these days perhaps we'll see
That the world will be the better for me.'
And do you not think this simple plan
Will make him a wise and useful man ? "

Learn wisdom from the PAST.

XXXIV

"TIME MORE SACRED THAN GOLD"

"It hath dust of gold."—JOB xxviii. 6.

I WONDER if any of you boys and girls could tell me where in the Bible we find miners at work? Mining is a very old occupation, and you will read about miners sinking shafts, and going down mines in search of precious stones and gold. I wonder also why it is that men will risk their lives for little bits of gold? Why is it that when gold is discovered near the surface in some land, you will find a great rush of people going out in search for more? It must be because it is scarce. It is very precious. It is not half so precious or useful as water, but then, you see, you can get plenty of water, and you can't get plenty of gold! Gold is useful. It can withstand acids that iron cannot. Iron will rust with rain, but gold won't. But the real reason why so many people seek gold is because it "buys" things. It can buy a nice house, furniture, pictures, and ever so many comforts. Solomon built the beautiful things in the Temple of pure gold, because it was very precious.

But gold cannot do everything. It can't buy health. It can't buy happiness. It can't buy all the big things of life. If it could, people with enormous wealth would be the happiest,

healthiest, and best-off people in the world, which they are not. An Irishman was standing in the streets of Glasgow looking into the window of a large jeweller's shop. He was admiring all the gold, silver, and bright articles, and examining the prices. A friend who knew him happened to see him, and going up to him said, "Surely you are not going to buy some of that expensive jewellery?" "Oh, no," he said, "I'm just enjoying myself fine looking at all the things that I can do without!" Yes, he was right. There are many things more precious than gold. Salvation is one of them. Time is another.

The antique dealer's shop in West Nile Street, Glasgow, has several sun-dials, and one of them reminds us of this truth: "Time is more sacred than Gold." "Time is Money," says another.

1. Ask the business man. He will tell you that Time *is* money to him. Men will take one conveyance in preference to another if, by so doing, they can save time.

You will never get back the time of your youth. It is far more precious than gold. Don't squander, then, your precious moments.

2. Someone has said that what we call "spare moments" should be called the "gold dust" of time. Very small fragments of gold, if carefully gathered up, become very valuable. But time is even more precious. In the mountainous districts of Switzerland there are only little patches of earth here and there among the hard

rocks, but the people are careful to cultivate every little spot, and will plant corn in places not larger than you could reach your arms across. If they did not use every inch of earth, they would grow very little corn. So, boys and girls, treat your moments as sacred, and use them for high purposes. Ferguson, a shepherd boy, studied astronomy by watching the stars at night while taking care of his sheep. Elihu Burritt knew a great many foreign languages, yet he was only a poor blacksmith. He learned them during the time he was working at the forge. In Dresden there is a Gallery called "The Gallery of Royal Gems." You touch a spring, and it yields a golden chicken. You touch the chicken, and it yields a crown of gems. You touch the crown, and there comes forth a richly-jewelled gold ring. Time only yields its best gifts to those who know the secret. And the secret is to treat every moment as precious.

3. Time is more sacred than gold for it is the Gift by which we develop our character.

An old Quaker once called his apprentice into his counting-house. "Now, John," he said, "you have been a good lad, and I am going to give thee what is more precious than gold." John was much astonished, and wondered what his master would give him. The master handed to John a paper on which he had written him a good character, saying how well he had done; and pointing to the first verse of the twenty-second chapter of Proverbs, he read: "A good name is

rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."

4. Another reason why time is more sacred than gold is that it affords us the means of laying hold on Eternal Life. Some people delay, and delay until time has gone, and they have not come to Christ.

Which, then, is more precious—Life, Time—or Gold?

You have so much to work out in time, there are such great issues of time, the judgment is to be on how we spent our time, we are hereafter what we have begun to be here in time, that the sun-dial speaks words of great wisdom. "Time is more sacred than Gold."

XXXV

"AB HOC MOMENTO PENDET AETERNITAS"

"On this moment hangs Eternity"

"UNITED IN TIME, PARTED IN TIME,
TO BE REUNITED WHEN TIME SHALL BE NO MORE"

"Eternity."—Isa. lvii. 15.

Dear boys and girls, a book on sun-dial sayings would surely be very incomplete without a reference to Eternity. Many sun-dials, as we have seen, emphasize the fact that "The Time is Short." But others remind us of "timeless ages."

The old sun-dial, for instance, dated 1794, at Newmills House, Balerno, says: "On this moment hangs Eternity." The very fine sun-dial in the King's Garden, Holyrood, which was presented by Charles I to Queen Henrietta Maria, says: "United in time, parted in time, To be reunited when time shall be no more." Both speak of the endless ages.

When boys and girls speak about "Eternal" they think first of something "everlasting." The words, however, are not synonymous. The mountains are called sometimes "everlasting," but they will some day pass away.

Tennyson, the poet, makes the brook to say: "Men may come, and men may go, but I go on for ever." But the brook won't go on for ever.

There are some flowers called "everlastings," but they soon fade and wither. I suppose all that is meant is that they last longer than other flowers.

Sometimes you hear a little boy or girl saying, "I'm never, never, never going to play with you again, or to speak to you again." That would be very serious. But you go back in half an hour and they are playing away and speaking to each other. "Never" did not, at any rate, mean "Eternal"; it just meant half an hour or so. You have probably seen a little fellow at his aunt's house. He has been warned to keep quiet, and behave himself well. He has promised, but when he gets there he becomes mischievous, runs about, makes a noise, and becomes a little nuisance. Then his aunt says he will never come back there again. He will never get any more nice toys again. But Tommy knows he *will* get back again, and that he *will* get toys—after a short time. People, therefore, use the word "Eternal" loosely. "Time"—we understand, although it is a deep philosophical subject. It is like a cord stretched from point to point. It had a beginning, and it will have an end.

But "Eternity!" The only way our poor minds can conceive of it is by saying that it is like the surrounding space. It is the great Unseen. I remember reading a little poem that will help you to understand the idea better. It is entitled "How long is Eternity?"

"Eternity! Eternity!
How long art thou, Eternity!
And yet to thee time hastes away
Like as the war-horse to the fray,
Or swift as couriers homeward go,
Or ship to port, or shaft from bow.
Ponder, O man, Eternity.

Eternity! Eternity!
How long art thou, Eternity!
A little bird with fretting beak
Might wear to nought the loftiest peak
Though but each thousand years it came,
Yet thou wert then as now the same.
Ponder, O man, Eternity.

Eternity! Eternity!
How long art thou, Eternity!
How terrible art thou in woe,
How fair when joys for ever glow;
God's goodness sheddeth gladness here,
His justice then wakes bitter fear.
Ponder, O man, Eternity!

On the big bell of Glasgow Cathedral the words are engraved: "In the year of grace 1583 Marcus Knox, a merchant in Glasgow, zealous for the interest of the Reformed Religion, caused me to be fabricated in Holland, for the use of his fellow-citizens of Glasgow, and placed me with solemnity in the Tower of their Cathedral. I was taught to proclaim the hours of unheeded time. 195 years had I sounded these awful warnings when I was broken by the hands of inconsiderate and unskilful men. In the year 1790 I was cast into the furnace, refounded at London, and returned to my sacred vocation.

Reader! Thou shalt know a resurrection: may it be to Eternal Life."

We are all, boys and girls, preparing in some way for these endless ages. That is one of the most important thoughts you can have. It will influence your whole life. What you are NOW, decides what you will be THEN. You live for ever and ever. May it be with Jesus and all whom you love around the Throne of God.

XXXVI

"DISCE DIES NUMERARE TUOS"

"Learn to number thy days"

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—Ps. xc. 12.

DEAR boys and girls, we now come to our final talk, and it must, you will agree, be devoted to as many crisp sayings from the sun-dials as we can find room for.

1. "Learn to number thy days," says the sun-dial on the old school-house at Wortley, near Sheffield. "Sapientis est numerare"—"It is the wise who count," is the saying on the one at the market-place of King's Lynn, Norfolk. That is wisdom.

> "The gay, who would be counted wise,
> Think all delight in pastime lies—
> Nor heed they what the wise condemn,
> Whilst they pass time, time passes them."

Treasure your time. Don't waste a single moment. Learn to number your days.

2. "L'heure passe, L'Amitié Reste"—"The hour passes, Friendship stays," says a French sun-dial. I should like you to be numbered amongst Christ's friends. What greater honour can you have than to be known as one of His little friends? John was a beloved friend of

Jesus, and he grew remarkably like His friend. A friend knows more than an associate. You tell your secrets to a friend, not to everyone. A friend helps you at all times. Real friendship does not change with the hour. As the sun-dial says, it "stays" in the wintry hours of trouble, as well as in the sunny hours of prosperity and joy. Are you going to make His Friendship closer as the days go by? Can you pray this prayer?

"I want to live near Jesus,
And never go astray;
To feel that I am growing
More like Him every day;
That I am always laying
My treasure up above,
And gaining more the spirit
Of His gentleness and love."

3. "I wish the sun would shine on all men's fruits and flowers, as well as mine."

This beautiful saying is on the sun-dial at Balcarres, Fife. It speaks of unselfishness. If only people would remember that saying there would be less strife in business, the home, and among nations.

4. "Nothing is difficult to the willing," says the sun-dial at Fying House, Sussex, which was erected in the reign of George II. That saying speaks for itself. When your lessons seem hard, or when any task seems almost impossible, learn to master them. Say "I will." Get at once into them, and you will find that, after all, they are not so difficult as you thought.

5. "Do To-day's work To-day," is the saying on the sun-dial at the Hotel, Hampstead Heath. God never places any burden upon your young shoulders that you cannot bear. Too many put off till "to-morrow," and therefore add to the day's work. If this goes on day after day then the task becomes impossible. Don't put off to-day's work. Do it now. One thing added to another, and then another, and then another, make a great load. Each day brings its own work, so it is wise not to add yesterday's or the day's before to it.

" Whene'er a duty waits for thee,
With sober judgment view it,
And never idly WISH it done ;
Begin AT ONCE, and DO IT.

For Sloth says falsely, ' By and by
Is just as well to do it ' :
But PRESENT strength is SUREST strength ;
BEGIN AT ONCE, and do it.

And find not lions in the way,
Nor faint if thorns bestrew it ;
But bravely try, and strength will come,
For God will help thee do it."

6. "The sun shines alike on cottage and on palace." This saying on a sun-dial at Marseilles emphasizes the fact that God gives His good gifts lavishly to all, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, good and bad. He showers His blessings on deserving and undeserving alike. Of course, there are special gifts He gives only to those who love Him, but should His goodness not call forth our gratitude?

7. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork." This quotation from the Nineteenth Psalm appears on the sun-dial at Moccas Court, Herefordshire. When we look up at the sky, and see the sun shining in majesty during the day, and the moon and stars at night, how they tell us of the glory of their Maker!

Boys and girls, take this advice. Whenever in after years you are inclined to worry about many things, spend an hour on some quiet hill observing the glory of the heavens, the great immensities. The things of the world you thought so very, very important, will then gradually shrink into insignificance, which is their true place. Try to remember the wisdom of the sun-dial.

8. "GRATIA DEI MECUM"—"The Grace of God with me," says the sun-dial on the pillar at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Happy is the boy and girl who can say they have the Grace of Jesus, which is the same as the Grace of God. They have all that is worth possessing in life.

"I would be true, for there are those who trust me,
I would be pure, for there are those who care,
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer,
I would be brave, for there is much to dare,
I would be friend to all the poor and friendless,
I would be giver, and forget the gift,
I would be humble, for I know my weakness,
I would look up, and love, and laugh, and lift."

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

TWELVE WISE SAYINGS

1. "Tak' tent o' Time, ere Time be tint." (Attend to time, lest time be lost.)—On the sun-dial at West Regent Street, Glasgow.

2. "Be the day weary, be the day long,
Soon shall it ring to evensong."
On the sun-dial at Ashcott, Somerset.

3. "Watch and Pray, Time steals away."—On the sun-dial on the south-west porch, St Peter's, Tavistock.

4. "Old Age creeps on unawares."—On sun-dials of two Devonshire churches.

5. "Let the day be without strife."—On the sun-dial at Darlington Church.

6. "The last hour to many, Possibly to you."—On the sun-dial at Hartlepool Church.

7. "I am a Shadow, so art thou,
I mark Time, dost thou?"
On the sun-dial at Greyfriars Churchyard, Stirling.

8. "Before thou lookest if I am right,
Look if thou art right thyself."
On the sun-dial at Laon.

9. "Take to thyself a Wise Mind."—On the sun-dial at Eyam Church, Derbyshire.

10. "So passes the glory of the world."—On the sun-dial at Inveresk Church.

11. "As the life is, so is its end."—On the old sun-dial on the Tower of Chelsea Church.

12. "ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL."—On the church sun-dial at Les Claux, Vallouise.

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